

Better Homes & Gardens

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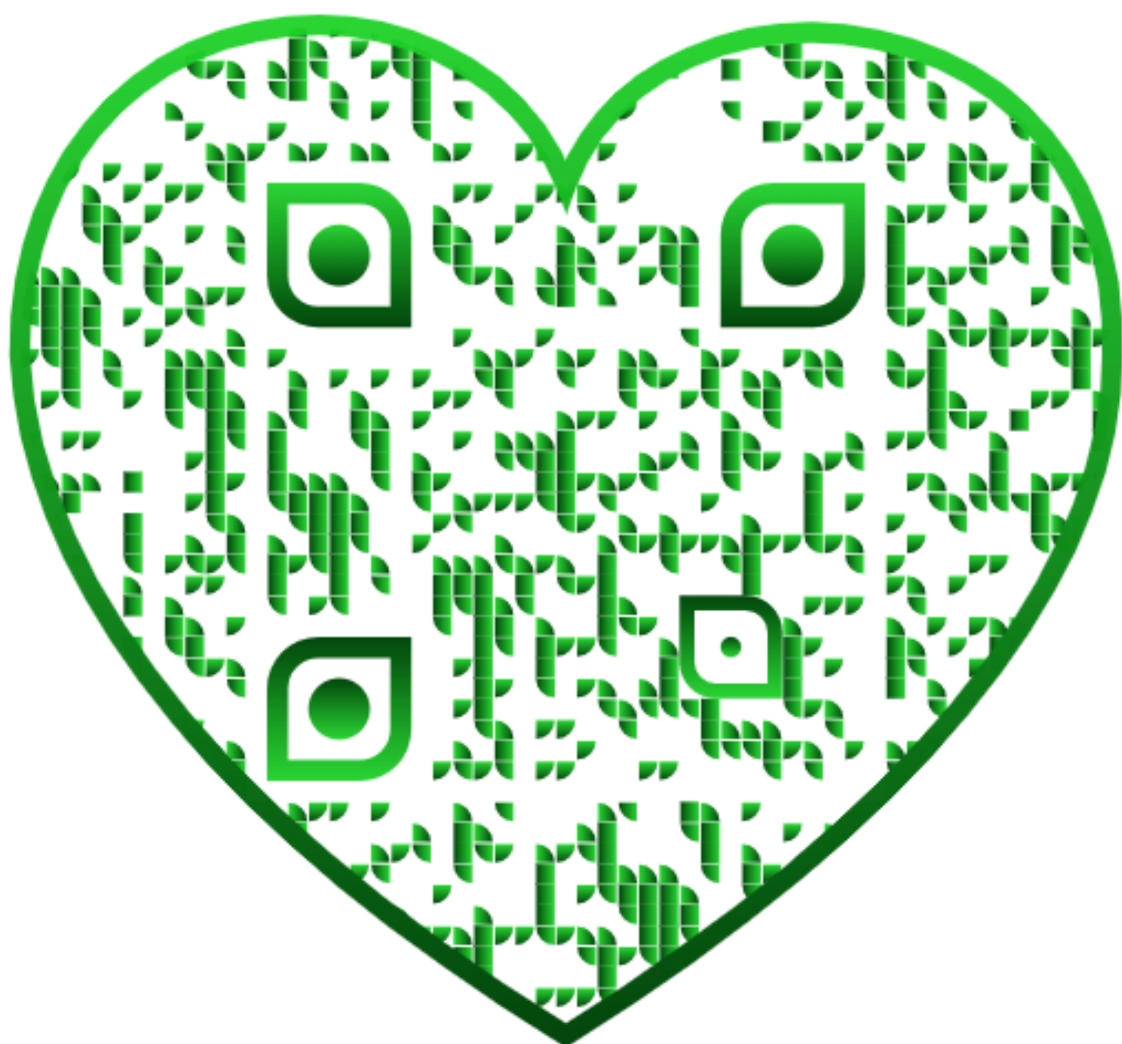
COZY Lives Here

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treat yourself

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cookies,
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Oceania Cruises Culinary and Brand Ambassador



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FALL STAYS WITH SOUTHERN SOUL. COMFORT WOVEN THROUGH TIME.

Historic stays, reimagined for today. Autumn in the Charleston area arrives softly, amber light on cobblestones, porch swings swaying in salt-tinged air, the scent of something rich and slow-simmered just around the corner. From strolls along the sand to quiet tides whispering through marsh grass, the season is felt in layered textures, warm welcomes, and the way time slows just enough to savor it all. A Charleston area getaway isn't just about where you stay, it's how the place stays with you.



Wander through canopied streets lined with Georgian facades and weathered shutters. Around each corner: cozy cafes, open-air markets, and the quiet hush of fall settling in. Charleston's timeless style becomes even more inviting in autumn, when sunlight hits Spanish moss just right and local design shops brim with thoughtful, seasonal keepsakes.

Book a stay where elegance lives in every detail, tailored lounges touched by golden lamplight, garden patios perfumed by tea olive, and suites layered in warmth and texture. Whether you're sipping cider on a rooftop or unwrapping a locally made treasure, Charleston's hotels offer the kind of fall comfort that **inspires and endures**.



SCAN FOR YOUR COMPLIMENTARY VACATION GUIDE.

CHARLESTON

South Carolina

Where beauty is intentional, moments are artfully crafted, and wonder lives in every detail.



HISTORY LOVES COMPANY

Step into the warm embrace of the Charleston area, where timeless charm meets thoughtful design. From welcoming stays to beautifully crafted experiences, the Lowcountry invites you to relax in spaces that celebrate tradition, comfort, and effortless Southern style. The perfect stay awaits.

october

OCTOBER 2025 • VOLUME 103 • NUMBER 10



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Nature plays prominently in the design of this Pacific Northwest home.

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PHOTO: KAITLIN GREEN

WHEN
THE CLOCK
STRIKES
DINNER,
THINK
STOUFFER'S.

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Bookmarked

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Better Homes & Gardens COLLECTION

Fall In Love

Create Your Own Cozy
Curl-Up Spot with Our Exclusive
Collection at Walmart

BHG
NEW
ARRIVAL

Greyson
TV Stand

80oz. Farm Apple
Pumpkin Candle

Modern Oushak
Area Rug

Emerson Curvy
Accent Chair

Almond Biscuit Faux
Mohair Throw Blanket



SCAN TO SHOP
Our Newest Arrivals





GOLD AND CRIMSON leaves rolling out across hillsides like enthusiastic fans doing the wave across a stadium. U-pick apple orchards and corn mazes in pumpkin patches. The hint of a crisp snap in the air—you know, “sweata weatha.”

There’s a lot to love about fall.

One of the things I like most about this season is being able to turn on the oven to

bake something without making the whole house feel like we’re channeling the Wicked Witch of the West—“I’m melllllting!” (Humor me the reference; it’s also Halloween month after all.)

One year when I was buying a heap of beautiful heirloom pumpkins for my porch from a local stand, the chatty farmer wandered over to tell me that if I wanted to cook them, the gray-green one I had in my hands was the most

delicious. When the trick-or-treaters had all cleared out and the squirrels started feasting on the jack-o’-lanterns, I took his advice and roasted several of the big gourds we hadn’t carved, ending up with dozens of cups of exceptionally flavorful puree in my freezer. Since then, one of my go-to pumpkin recipes has been a sheet pan bar with brown butter frosting. This year I’m changing things up with a batch of the Nutella-Pumpkin Spice Bars or the Cardamom-Brown Butter Blondies in our “It Takes

Two” story on *page 76*. If I’m in the mood for something a little brighter, I’ll try the Lemon-Matcha Marble Cake. And if I want something a bit more decadent, I’ll make the ultimate coffeehouse muffins from our cover (*page 40*) or the Cowboy Skillet Cookie (*page 62*). Whatever your fall flavor adventure looks like, I hope this issue has something to satisfy.

LETTERS + COMMENTS

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Happy sweata weatha to all who celebrate,

OMA BLAISE FORD,
Senior Executive Editor



THE BHG RED PLAID CAFÉ

This month we’re hosting a very special pop-up café experience in New York City.

Named after our iconic Better Homes & Gardens cookbook and its red plaid cover, the event brings to life the cozy nostalgia of the much-loved cookbook through interactive sessions and fun coffee chats with creators, editors, and featured celebrity guests. We hope you can join us!

For more info and registration details, scan the QR code, *opposite*. If you can’t make it, you can still bring those warm coffeehouse feels home with ideas from our “Café Culture” section starting on *page 26*.

PROMOTION

Better Homes & Gardens

Red Plaid Café

NEW YORK

New York's Coziest Fall Café, by BHG

Join Better Homes & Gardens for the season's coziest pop-up coffee shop—featuring a star-studded lineup of your favorite celebs, creators, and BHG editors. With interactive moments throughout the day, it's everything you love about autumn in New York—all under one (very plaid) roof.



KRISTEN KISH

CHEF, EMMY-NOMINATED TELEVISION HOST & AUTHOR



CRAIG CONOVER

ENTREPRENEUR & TV PERSONALITY



ELI RALLO

AUTHOR, LIFESTYLE EXPERT & CREATOR



GINGER PERRA

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Bewitching Decor TRENDS

Will Gothic styles still reign as a winner for the spooky set? Will a new Fright Night color scheme rival classic orange and black? Trend experts weigh in so your Halloween decorating will be the envy of all the neighborhood witches and wizards. [BHG.com/HalloweenTrends2025](https://www.bhg.com/HalloweenTrends2025)



Cafécore

Bring the feel of your favorite coffee shop into your own home. With design inspiration, coffeehouse-style recipe ideas, and tips for brewing your perfect cup of joe, our online Cafécore special edition has everything you need to craft a cozy café vibe at home. [BHG.com/CafeCore](https://www.bhg.com/CafeCore)



Piece by Piece Puzzle Time

Attention, puzzle people! BHG teamed up with Piecework Puzzles to create the yummiest nostalgia-fueled challenge just in time for comfy indoor days and holiday gifting. It's 1,000 pieces of delicious entertainment, available now.



Scan the code to buy a puzzle today!



Best in Butter

The butter aisle is expansive. We snagged 17 readily available butters and put them through their paces—smearing on toast, baking up biscuits, and sautéing grilled cheeses—to create our ultimate butter guide. Stick with us so you'll know exactly which to buy for what purpose. [BHG.com/ButterGuide](https://www.bhg.com/ButterGuide)

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Dream

Inspiration of the month

A dedicated game space—be it just a corner or an entire room—brings energy and a little nostalgia into the home. In an age of endless screen time, that's exactly the point, says designer Megan Gorelick, who created this Lancaster, PA, game room centered around a whimsically painted Ping-Pong table (with a removable net) to lure everyone off their devices and into the moment.

↑
This custom-painted backboard echoes one of the patterns on the upholstered stools.

Game On!

Today's rec rooms blend retro charm with modern polish, making a stylish case for analog games and good old-fashioned face time.



The Dream List



Wallpaper and
rugs help
soften sound.



Check out
Arcade1Up, eBay,
and Facebook
Marketplace
for game table
deals.

1 KEEP IT MOVING

Game rooms thrive on dynamic, flexible layouts. Swiveling armchairs and poufs, *far left*, let spectators follow the action, while convertible tables can adapt to large gatherings. “Look for billiards or shuffleboard tables with tops so they can double as a dining surface or buffet,” says designer Kari McIntosh, who chose a Ping-Pong table with a removable net for this club-inspired space, *left*. The table also serves as a puzzle station on low-key game nights.

2 GET READY TO RUMBLE

Scuffs and spills come with the territory. Go for performance fabrics, dark patterned rugs, and durable finishes. “Think of it as a hotel lobby, using indoor-outdoor fabrics in lush textures,” says designer Erin Gates, who opted for plaid’s camouflaging powers in a Boston game room, *bottom left*.

3 ENTICE ALL AGES

The best game rooms appeal to all generations with a combination of active spaces and cozy seating areas. “A modern take on classic pub or country club style feels grown-up but still family friendly,” Gates says. Bonus points for an old-school pinball machine or vintage arcade game. “They’re a draw for almost any age group,” she notes. ■

PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) REBECCA McALPIN, CHRISTOPHER STARK, MICHAEL J. LEE

**THINKING
EVERY PROJECT
IS A DIY?**



YOU'RE NOT YOU WHEN YOU'RE HUNGRY



bookmarked

SPOTTED, LOVED, SAVED

Kick Back

This cozy swap for a coffee table does double duty in style.

Trend alert: Comfy upholstered ottomans are taking over living rooms everywhere. Used instead of a coffee table, oversized ottomans like the one in this space by Amber Lewis offer pattern, texture, and an easy place to put up your feet. Top them with a tray or books to create a sturdy surface for beverages or snacks. Turn the page for a few of our favorite picks.

● Topanga Ottoman (in one-of-a-kind vintage textiles, patterns vary); shoppe.amberinteriordesign.com



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*Snore presets available on FlexFit™ smart adjustable bases may temporarily reduce common mild snoring in otherwise healthy adults.



HIDDEN STORAGE

A soft, round shape with solid wood legs and storage inside. Springwood Round Storage Ottoman in Cream, 36.25", \$158; walmart.com/BHG



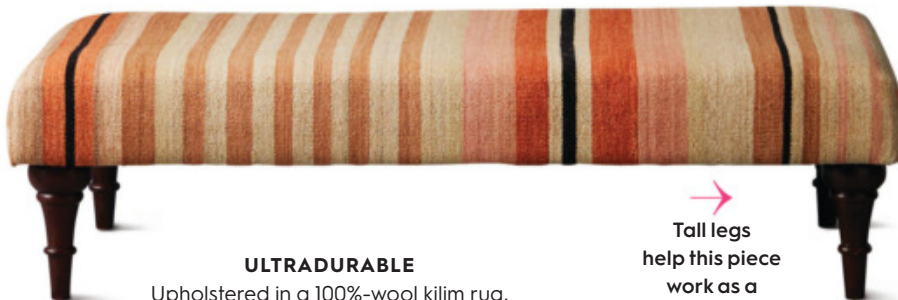
GRAPHIC STRIPES

A bold stripe in neutral brown on cream. Pair two together to double the impact. Wool Kilim Coffee Table in Cream and Brown, 24", \$290; perigold.com



BOLD & UNIQUE

The hexagon shape and leafy Jacquard fabric are instant conversation starters. Pierce and Ward Hexagon Ottoman, 28", \$599; westelm.com



ULTRADURABLE

Upholstered in a 100%-wool kilim rug, this hard-wearing ottoman will age beautifully over time. Flatweave Kilim Ottoman, 55"x31", \$1,200; greenrow.com

→ Tall legs help this piece work as a bench if you want to switch things up.



KID-FRIENDLY

A comfy, cushioned ottoman covered in "whoops"-friendly faux leather. Deep tufts create a classic feel. Chesterfield Ottoman, 32.5", \$399; pbteen.com



DOUBLE DUTY

Plush bouclé with a convenient 30" table that slides over the top. Babs Solid Wood Single Coffee Table, 48"x26", \$650; wayfair.com



SIMPLE & SOFT

The easygoing round shape in understated stripes offers just enough curve and pattern. Leah Modern Ottoman, 36", \$999; kathykuohome.com



TEXTURED WOVEN

Natural jute in a chunky weave that adds tons of organic texture to a space. Woven Jute Cocktail Ottoman, 36", \$399; joonlolo.com ■

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ACHING,
ACHING,
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Ting Sensor with Fire Prevention Service (1 year), \$99; tingfire.com



DESIGN, *by the Book*

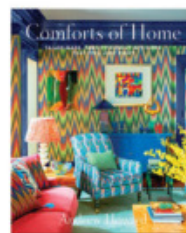
A harvest of beautiful new decorating books has hit the scene, and these are a few we're especially obsessed with. Packed full of gorgeous visual and emotional inspiration, each one is a guide to improving your overall life through your home by creating layered, personal, idiosyncratic spaces that encourage you to step outside of your comfort zone. Case in point: this colorful, nuanced dining space, *above*, by Hendricks Churchill, featured in the studio's new title, *Distinctly American*.

Creepy-Crawly Garlands

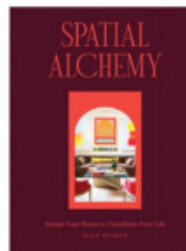
Make your home spooky cute in a snap. These Halloween paper garlands—available in beetles, bats, and spiders on 15 feet of twine you can shorten as needed to fit your space—dress up mantels, stair railings, or entryway mirrors. Drape across a bookshelf, above your kitchen window, or around your front door for a scary (but not too scary) welcome. Bonus: Reuse them year after year. From \$26; thecreativegarlandcompany.com ■



DISTINCTLY AMERICAN
Design studio Hendricks Churchill's approach to creating authentic spaces. \$75; rizzolibookstore.com



COMFORTS OF HOME
Bold color and design by interior designer Andrew Howard. \$50; store.abramsbooks.com



SPATIAL ALCHEMY
Olga Naiman's guide to using your interiors as a tool for empowerment. \$35; rizzolibookstore.com



DESIGN REIMAGINED
Where vibrant maximalism and traditional style meet. By Corey Damen Jenkins, \$50; rizzolibookstore.com

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LIGHTHOUSE LANDING,
GRAND RIVERS

drink

Thrills & Chills

Drink up—if you dare. There's something for every ghoulish and goblin in this batch of potent potions and swirling elixirs.

**Dragon
Fruit Punch**

**Poison
Apple Sour**

Look for gummy eyeballs in the candy aisle around Halloween (or garnish with a thin slice of green apple instead).

**RECIPES
BEGIN ON
PAGE 93.**

**Cranberry
Zombie
Mocktails**

**Magic Matcha
Boba Lattes**

Sometimes referred to as blue matcha, butterfly pea flower powder is available in tea shops, in health food stores, or online.



**DRAGON
FRUIT PUNCH**

Pair dragon fruit—the pink, mildly sweet flesh of the funky tropical fruit—with mini dragon egg-size scoops of melon sorbet and effervescent Prosecco.

**POISON
APPLE SOUR**

This cocktail is loosely based on a classic sour ratio (two parts spirit, one part sour, one part sweet): vodka meets sour apple schnapps and hard apple cider for sweetness. Pour a bit of grenadine over a bar spoon to create the layered look.

**CRANBERRY
ZOMBIE
MOCKTAILS**

A homemade cranberry syrup cuts the sweetness—and makes it look like Dracula just took a sip—in this icy blender bev of orange, pineapple, and lime juices. (For a boozy rendition, add a shot of white rum.)

**MAGIC
MATCHA BOBA
LATTES**

Tint homemade simple syrup with butterfly pea flower powder, then layer the indigo syrup with milk, boba pearls, and a green matcha tea float. ■

make

GOOD Nights

Look to the skies for magical, moonlit inspiration, then make your own enchanted scene for your front door decor.

STARRY, STARRY NIGHT

Shooting stars, crescent moons, and owls illuminate these dreamy pumpkin designs that can be accomplished with a variety of techniques. You can find the patterns at BHG.com/PumpkinStencils.

← Focus on the tops of pumpkins for a different perspective. The owl, for example, uses the stem for the beak.

LIGHTING TIP

For a clean design, carve a hole in the bottom of your pumpkin. Insert a battery-operated tea light for a glow that can go all night.

MIX & MATCH METHODS

Try any—or all—of these ways to craft a set of delightful celestial pumpkins. Use our design templates to transfer star and moon shapes before carving or etching.

The look of distant stars or swirling patterns can be created with a drill and a variety of bit sizes.

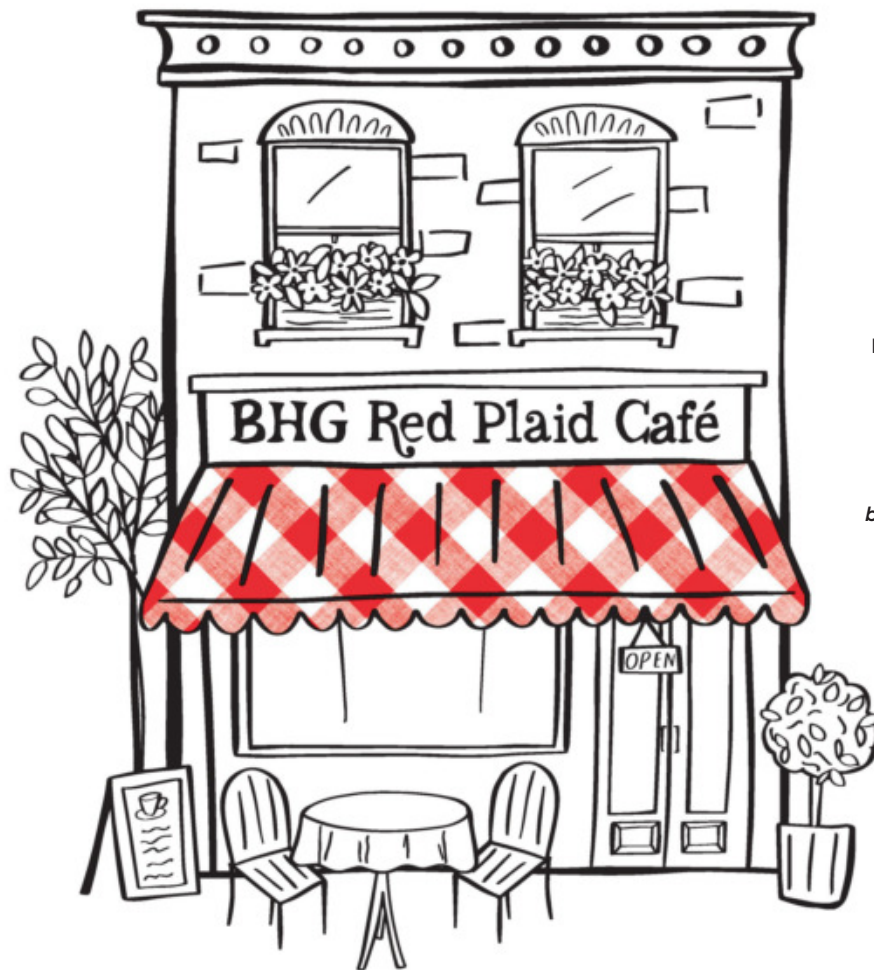
If you're not into the mess that comes with carving, try paint or adhesive vinyl shapes to make designs like the black moon and stars, *opposite*. Scrapbook supplies like adhesive-back gems, charms, and feathers make it quick and easy to dress up a pumpkin. (We like this for our youngest decorators.)

A white chalk marker allows you to trace your designs directly on the pumpkin and contrasts nicely against deep orange. ■



SEASONAL FUN
You'll find more than 100 holiday ideas (like the drinks on page 22) in *BHG Halloween Tricks & Treats*, on newsstands now.

CELEBRATING Café Culture



*
We're hosting a
pop-up café event in
NYC on October 17!
Join us for a cup
and inspiring coffee
chats with special
guests. Details at
bhgredplaidcafe.com.

What is it about a coffeehouse that always feels so comforting? Maybe it's the rituals of the café: the hiss of steam, the scent of fresh coffee grounds, the hum of conversations. Maybe it's the spaces themselves, little havens of coziness where caffeine and creativity collide. Like a good mocha, it's probably a delicious mix of all those elements. In these pages, we're spilling the beans on what makes cafés our sanctuaries and how to create something of that convivial ambience at home. We've also got favorite tools for making and serving a satisfying cuppa, plus recipes for coffeehouse-inspired muffins. We invite you to sit back, relax, and drink in the good cheer of café culture.

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Steeped in COMFORT

There'd be no "cafécore" without the aesthetic cred of the best-looking cafés. Peek into a few of our favorites and bring a shot of their signature style home.



Washington, DC Tatte Bakery

Stepping inside this Dupont Circle bakery is like slipping into a light-filled Parisian patisserie thanks to mosaic tile floors in cocoa and cream, polished subway tiles that span the walls floor to ceiling, and burnished woods that glow like drizzled honey in the sunlight.

1

BISTRO CHAIR

A timeless, works-anywhere bentwood chair in a warm finish. Eon Walnut Dining Side Chair, \$145; homedepot.com

2

MOSAIC MUGS

A splash of bistro tile without the need to renovate. Bistro Tile Stoneware Teacups, \$48 for four; anthropologie.com

3

ARCHED CABINET

Black-stained wood with an arched top that evokes French architecture. Movable wood shelves store coffee gear. Juliet Cabinet, \$348; walmart.com/BHG

4

BARN LIGHT

Add one or two to your kitchen for a touch of café-industrial style. Original Wall Sconce, from \$295; barnlight.com



1



2

3



4

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AND ART DECO LINES, PARADECO
IS AKIN TO WES ANDERSON
ON A BEACHSIDE VACAY.



St. Petersburg, FL

Paradeco Coffee Roasters

Banquettes in flamingo pink, a wallscape bursting with foliage, and curves at every turn dance through this Art Deco-inspired café.

1

TULIP TABLE

Leilani White Marble Top and Gold Tulip Dining Table, \$800; worldmarket.com

2

WALLPAPER

Pink-and-blue pastel geometrics with subtle gold foil details. Slice Wallpaper in Mist, \$245; hyggeandwest.com

3

WALL PLANTER

Cluster two or three to create a vertical wall garden. Fluted Ceramic Indoor/Outdoor Wallscape Planters, from \$49 each; westelm.com

4

DINING CHAIR

Palette Side Dining Chair by Modway, \$200 for two; amazon.com

5

BUFFET TABLE

Fluted details and gold hardware give this little cabinet big style. Banta Accent Cabinet in Green, \$470; wayfair.com

6

CANDLEHOLDER

Shiny brass with all the details. Palm Tree Candlestick, \$25; hm.com



The brushed-gold base and authentic marble top add an Art Deco-approved flavor to the modern tulip shape.

1



3

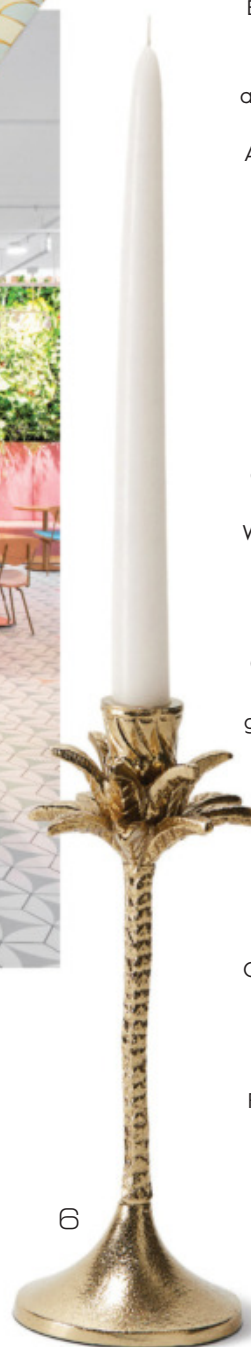


4

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5



6

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Pink-tinted glass with a subtle scallop evokes the whimsical feel of a stained-glass window.



Kohler, WI

The Greenhouse

A botanical fantasy transported across the pond from England's Lancashire County to the American Midwest. Lush and leafy botanicals, potted palms, marble-topped bistro tables, cane chairs, and glimmering stained glass feel straight from a conservatory.

1

1 PENDANT LIGHT

Recycled Glass Pendant in Berry, \$179; greenrow.com



2

2 DINING CHAIR

Easygoing black bentwood and cane blur the lines between modern and traditional. Winona Wood Dining Chair, \$320 for two; bedbathandbeyond.com

3

3 WALL MURAL

No arched leaded windows? Get that magical greenhouse feel in paper form. Botanical Greenhouse Print Textured Wallpaper, \$4/sq. ft.; wallsrepublic.com



4

4 BISTRO TABLE

Round White Marble and Black Metal Bistro Side Table, \$250; worldmarket.com



5

If you can't find a live banana leaf tree, go faux. This one looks just like the real thing.



4

A vintage-inspired piece in a petite size (23" diameter).

5

5 ARTIFICIAL GREENERY

Faux Banana Leaf Tree, \$199; potterybarn.com ■

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Coffee AND Cream

ITALIAN ROAST 2004-7A Valspar

WHIPPED CREAM DC-001 Behr

CRISP LINEN CSP-305 Benjamin Moore

COFFEE DATE Clare

ALMOND ROCA SW 9105 Sherwin-Williams

Like an espresso crowned with a cloud of whipped foam, the color pairing of rich browns and milky whites is pure comfort. Quiet and easy to live with, it's also a classic that doesn't age, and designers know that shades of cocoa, cinnamon, or raw sugar paired with cream hues create depth without heaviness. Four pros show us why this palette—like a cappuccino from your favorite coffee shop—is an invitation to slow your scroll and savor the coziness.

SET THE TONE

Combining browns can create instant tone-on-tone warmth, as this dining room in a loft designed by Billy Cotton proves. Just keep their undertones similar so they don't clash, says Daniel LeBlanc, studio manager for the firm. "Color temperature is key to harmony. These surfaces are all warm and rich, so they blend nicely without feeling too neutral." The ecru and alabaster elements feel balanced thanks to their colossal footprint. "It is immediately calming," LeBlanc says.

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"WHEN CHOOSING WHITES TO PAIR WITH BROWN, CHOOSE WARM WHITES THAT ARE NOT TOO STARK TO CREATE A GENTLE CONTRAST, RATHER THAN ONE THAT FEELS TOO GRAPHIC." —NICOLE SALVESEN, *designer*

WIELD TEXTURE

By sticking to a cohesive palette of creams and midtone white oaks in this living room, *right*, designer Maureen Ursino put the focus on texture. "Whitewashed brick, an upholstered chair, a wool rug—all play together nicely to bring that warmth and depth," she says. Their pale, nubbly surfaces are complemented by tactile wood tones in the paneled shelving units, live-edge coffee table, and woven rope chair. Artwork by Alisa Galitsyna enlivens the room.



SOFTEN UP

Caramel walls temper vibrant artwork in this open-plan kitchen by design firm Salvesen Graham, *left*, while mellow whites "create a gentle contrast," Nicole Salvesen says. Subtlety was also key for designer Alvin Wayne, who used a wallpaper mural that looks like travertine for a calming effect in his bedroom, *far left*. Paired with wood finishes and plush ivory accents, it's "cozy and peaceful," he says. ■



THE FINISHING TOUCH FOR Fall Favorites

Expertly crafted and endlessly versatile, McCormick® Finishing Sugars can bring a variety of fall flavors to everyday recipes. Just look at how a few sprinklings of sweet, seasonal goodness can elevate this sip and snack pairing.

Pumpkin Spice Caramel Popcorn

Cook: 1 hour 10 minutes **Total:** 1 hour 20 minutes **Serves:** 10

INGREDIENTS

- Cooking spray
- 12 cups plain popcorn, popped
- 10 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 ½ cup packed light brown sugar
- ½ cup light corn syrup
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 2 cups toasted pecan halves, optional
- 1 ½ teaspoons McCormick® Pure Vanilla Extract
- ¼ cup McCormick® Pumpkin Spice Finishing Sugar

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 250°F. Coat large sheet pan with cooking spray; set aside. Place popcorn in large bowl; set aside.
2. Melt butter in large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add brown sugar, corn syrup, McCormick® Pumpkin Spice Finishing Sugar, and salt. Bring to boil, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat to low and simmer, stirring constantly, for 3 minutes, or until thickened. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla and baking soda (mixture will be foamy). Stir in pecans, if using.
3. Pour mixture over popcorn, quickly folding to coat evenly. Spread popcorn evenly on prepared sheet pan.
4. Bake 1 to 1 ½ hours, stirring occasionally, until popcorn is deep golden brown and caramel has set. Serve immediately or store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.



Apple Cider Mocktail

Cook: 5 minutes **Total:** 5 minutes **Serves:** 3

INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ cups (12 ounces) pure pressed apple juice or apple cider
- ¼ cup (2 ounces) fresh lemon juice, plus more for glasses (from 2 medium lemons)
- Apple slices or cinnamon sticks, for garnish
- 1 cup (8 ounces) chilled club soda or plain seltzer, plus more to taste
- Ice
- 2 tablespoons McCormick® Apple Cider Finishing Sugar, plus more for glasses



DIRECTIONS

1. Mix apple juice, lemon juice, and McCormick® Apple Cider Finishing Sugar in large measuring cup or pitcher until well blended, about 30 seconds.
2. Stir in seltzer to mix. Set aside.
3. Moisten rims of 3 (8-ounce) beverage glasses with additional lemon juice. Dip in additional Finishing Sugar to coat. Fill halfway with ice. Divide mocktail mixture evenly among glasses. Serve immediately, garnished with apple slices or cinnamon sticks, if desired.

Make It Yours:

Want it sweeter? Add orange juice. Craving tart flavor? Go with pomegranate juice. However you like your mocktail, it'll taste great with this autumnal snack.

DISCOVER
MORE FALL
FAVORITES



MAKE EVERY
BITE
delicious

With a dash of McCormick Ground Cinnamon, a classic snickerdoodle becomes more than a holiday treat. It's the scent that greets guests at the door, the flavor that sparks laughter around the table, and the sweetness that lingers long after the last crumb.



Find more
recipes



• This recipe makes standard-size or jumbo treats. For lofty muffins, start in a hot oven, then drop the temp to finish baking.

Go BIG

Drawing inspo from tender, oversize coffeehouse muffins, we zhuzhed a recipe from our archives, adding a crumble that channels some of our favorite espresso drinks.





latte-inspired Crumble Topper

This customizable, freezer-friendly crumble recipe draws on buzzy coffeehouse drink orders.

BASE CRUMBLE

In a medium bowl combine 1 cup flour; 1 cup granulated sugar; 1 cup toasted walnuts or pecans, finely chopped; 6 Tbsp. melted butter; and ¼ tsp. salt. Stir until crumbly. Makes 3 cups (enough for 24 muffins).

VANILLA LATTE CRUMBLE

Prepare as directed, except stir 1 tsp. vanilla bean paste or vanilla into melted butter. Add 3 oz. grated white chocolate and 1 Tbsp. instant espresso coffee powder to crumble mixture.

BROWN SUGAR-OAT LATTE CRUMBLE

Prepare as directed, except reduce flour to ½ cup and add ½ cup regular rolled oats. Replace granulated sugar with packed brown sugar. Add 1 Tbsp. instant espresso coffee powder and 1 tsp. ground cinnamon to crumble mixture.

CHERRY CHAI LATTE CRUMBLE

Add ½ cup chopped dried sweet or tart cherries and 1 Tbsp. unsweetened chai spice blend to the crumble mixture.

Bakery-Style Muffins with Crumble Topper

HANDS ON 30 min.

TOTAL TIME 1 hr.

- ½ recipe Crumble Topper (left)
- 1¾ cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup sugar
- ¾ tsp. baking powder
- ¼ tsp. baking soda
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- ¾ cup buttermilk
- 5 Tbsp. butter, melted and cooled
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 cup fresh or frozen* fruit, such as chopped pitted sweet or tart cherries, blueberries, raspberries, or chopped peaches (optional)
- 1 recipe Vanilla Icing or honey (optional)

1. Prepare Crumble Topper. Preheat oven to 425°F. Grease twelve 2½-inch muffin cups or line with paper bake cups. In a large bowl stir together flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and ¼ tsp. salt. Make a well in center of mixture.

2. In a medium bowl combine egg, buttermilk, melted butter, and vanilla. Add egg mixture all at once to flour mixture. Stir just until moistened (batter should be lumpy). Gently fold fruit, if using, into batter. Fill prepared muffin cups using a generous ¼ cup batter per cup (cups will be full). Sprinkle each cup with 2 to 3 Tbsp. Crumble Topper; gently press into batter.

3. Bake 8 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350°F; bake until golden and a toothpick inserted into center of muffins comes out clean, 10 to 12 minutes more. Cool in muffin cups on a wire rack 5 minutes. Remove from pan; cool 10 to 15 minutes more. Drizzle with Vanilla Icing if you like. Serve warm. (Store cooled muffins in an airtight container at room temperature up to 2 days; freeze up to 3 months.) Makes 10 to 12 muffins.

***TIP** If using frozen fruit, measure while frozen. If fruit is in large pieces, thaw slightly and chop while still icy.

PER MUFFIN 279 cal, 12 g fat (5 g sat fat), 36 mg chol, 219 mg sodium, 40 g carb, 1 g fiber, 22 g sugars, 4 g pro

VANILLA ICING In a small bowl stir together 1 cup powdered sugar, 1 tsp. vanilla bean paste, and 3 to 4 Tbsp. heavy cream or milk.

JUMBO MUFFINS Grease six 3½-inch muffin cups or line with paper bake cups. Prepare batter as directed. Fill muffin cups using a scant ½ cup batter per cup. Top each with 3 to 4 Tbsp. Crumble Topper. Bake 8 minutes at 425°F. Reduce oven temperature to 350°F; bake until golden and a toothpick comes out clean, 15 to 20 minutes more. (If necessary, cover with foil the last 10 minutes of baking to prevent overbrowning.) ■



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POUR PERFECTION

"I always find myself craving a black drip coffee in the morning," Isabelle says. Her secret weapon for an ideal drip brew: Aiden Precision Coffee Maker, \$400; fellowproducts.com



TOP IT OFF

"If my coffee is going to have milk in it, I want it foamy! I love that this does both hot and cold foam and is super easy to clean." Aeroccino 4 Milk Frother, \$129; nespresso.com



GREEN IS GOLD

If she's on a matcha kick, Isabelle opts for individual packets. "I don't like to leave a matcha can open for too long, so I love the convenience and freshness that these individual sachets provide." Sun Goddess Matcha, \$58 for 28 servings; piquelife.com



I love to hand my guests a color of mug that best matches what they are wearing!"

—ISABELLE HEIKENS



Coffee at Isabelle's

She's known for her monthly themed dinner party series on social media, but we happen to know she's also a caffeine aficionado. Straight from the cozy coffee nook she designed in her Toronto home, **Isabelle Heikens** shares her favorite tools for brewing, sipping, and savoring the perfect cup.



PASTEL PERFECT

"Every time I break out this mug set I get so many compliments," Isabelle says. "It is the perfect mismatched set without being too mismatched." Macaron Mugs, \$90 for six mugs in six colors; zwilling.com



SWEET TOUCH

Elevating her morning jolts: syrups she makes herself in flavors like honey-lavender or brown sugar-cardamom and keeps in pretty dispensers. Spaceneat Coffee Syrup Dispensers, \$26 for two; amazon.com



QUICK BUZZ

Also perking up her table: handblown juice tumblers that have bee-shape beads pressed into their surface. She uses them for iced coffee or matcha. Icon Juice Glasses, \$16 each; anthropologie.com ■



Hot Titles

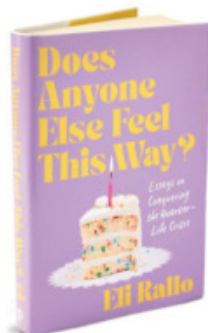
Cozy up with new memoirs from two of the personalities joining us at the Red Plaid Café.



Accidentally on Purpose

by Kristen Kish

The chef and TV host tells her story thus far, from her Midwest childhood as an adoptee from Korea to finding her passion for food, which led her to winning *Top Chef* and eventually hosting the popular show. Far from sugarcoating her struggles, Kish celebrates them for the way they shaped her into a voice for honesty and authenticity in the food world.



Does Anyone Else Feel This Way?

Essays on Conquering the Quarter-Life Crisis

by Eli Rallo

This twentysomething TikTok star chronicles all the ways that growing up is hard to do but reminds herself and us that it's all going to be OK. With equal parts candor and humor, Rallo advises on what to do when your postcollege "real life" isn't turning out to be what you thought it would. In fact, it might be better.



bagels, anyone?

PopUp x BHG

To celebrate our first-ever pop-up café experience, we teamed up with buzzy PopUp Bagels to create a custom **Salted Maple Banana Bread cream cheese** flavor, available at our event and in their NYC shops October 16–22. Even if you can't make it in person, you can get in on the schmear fun of it all with this make-at-home version: Stir together 8 oz. plain cream cheese, ¼ cup mashed ripe banana, 2 Tbsp. pure maple syrup, 2 Tbsp. packed brown sugar, 1 tsp. vanilla bean paste, and ½ tsp. cinnamon until smooth. (For a lighter texture, whisk with a mixer until fluffy, about 1 minute.) ■



“I don’t even drink coffee, but I love the *steady hum of a café* for getting things done. *Coffitivity.com* (\$4/month) plays ambient noise from cafés in 15 different locales so if I want to pretend I’m working in Paris, I can.”

—AMY PANOS, senior deputy editor



GHOST STORIES IN STORIED PLACES.

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Tip: Store pet food in its original packaging rather than decanting. It will stay fresher.

Sit, Stay, Store Paws-itively Useful

Designing a 5'x6' space is no easy feat—especially when it has to function for kids and pets and look good too. Here's how designer Ashley Sharpe made it all work.

Yes, interior designer Ashley Sharpe outfitted her mudroom for the whole family, but really, “it was very much dog driven,” she says. “It’s our muddy-paw interception zone, so we designed it around our dog.” To start, Ashley sketched out exactly how

she wanted the built-in to look and function then picked finishes that would blend with the rest of her 1909 Dutch Colonial home.

• The Built-In

Ashley designed the built-in to include four hooks and storage baskets (one for each member of her family), a pet station, and a bench. “I even measured the height of Hunter

rain boots to be sure they could slide underneath,” she adds.

• Feeding Station

The pet drawers were installed under the bench: The top one is for food and water dishes, while the drawer below stores kibble. The elevated bowls make it easier for her dog, Chief, to eat and drink and reduce how much he needs to bend down. The station also makes something functional into an attractive focal point.

• Finishes

Ashley wanted the muddy-paw room to work hard and look good. She painted the built-in, trim, and beaded-board walls to match her shutters (Benjamin Moore Essex Green) and chose a dog print wallpaper from Thibaut to further prove it’s her pup’s room. The pebble flooring adds a cozy, aged feel. “It’s actually outdoor flooring, so I knew it could take a beating and be scrubbed really well,” Ashley says. ■

Get the Look Dinner Drawers

You can get the same idea in your house—and for much less than a custom build.



Pick your size and install under an existing cabinet. From \$260; handyclcom.etsy.com



Store food and toys, hang leashes, and keep bowls out of sight. Roomfitters Modern Dog Feeding Station, \$135; amazon.com



A stand-alone option. Boomer Pet Feeder with Drawer, \$85; wayfair.com



Build Your Own Pet Bowl Stand with more than 13 options in small and large sizes. Don’t forget to personalize! \$79–\$119, plus bowls; markandgraham.com

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HOMIE— Buying Smarts

From choosing the right mortgage to packing know-how and building a tool kit for home repairs, we'll help you navigate the home-ownership process. Let's move!



Meet Your Mortgage Match

Explore the best loan options for home buyers.

Fixed-Rate (aka Conventional) Mortgage

This is the most standard type of mortgage. It's characterized by the interest rate staying the same for the life of the loan, meaning your mortgage payment does too. (Note that changes in property taxes and/or insurance can increase your monthly payment regardless.)

Who's It For? Buyers with solid credit scores, some money to put down, and no plans to move anytime soon.

Adjustable-Rate Mortgage (ARM)

Typically, an ARM starts with an extra-low interest rate, but remember the name: After the initial fixed term, the interest rate adjusts based on the market, and higher monthly payments ensue.

Who's It For? Buyers confident they'll sell or refinance within the fixed-rate term. Proceed with caution.

Federal Housing Administration (FHA) Loan

The FHA approves the lender and insures the borrower, which

loosens up the latter's qualification process—less-than-stellar credit scores and low down payments are A-OK. These loans do require mortgage insurance for a minimum of 11 years, regardless of your down payment.

Who's It For? Anyone, but especially low- to moderate-income buyers working on their credit scores.

Veterans Affairs (VA) Loan

Issued through private lenders, this loan is offered through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, which guarantees part of it. Expect a lower interest rate and a more lenient credit score requirement than a conventional loan, and with no down payment or mortgage insurance.

Who's It For? Active and veteran service members and spouses, including surviving spouses.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Loan

The USDA backs these loans and requires zero down payment—no mortgage insurance necessary—with lenient credit score requirements and interest rates that are typically lower than conventional loans.

Who's It For? Buyers in rural or suburban areas with moderate to low incomes.

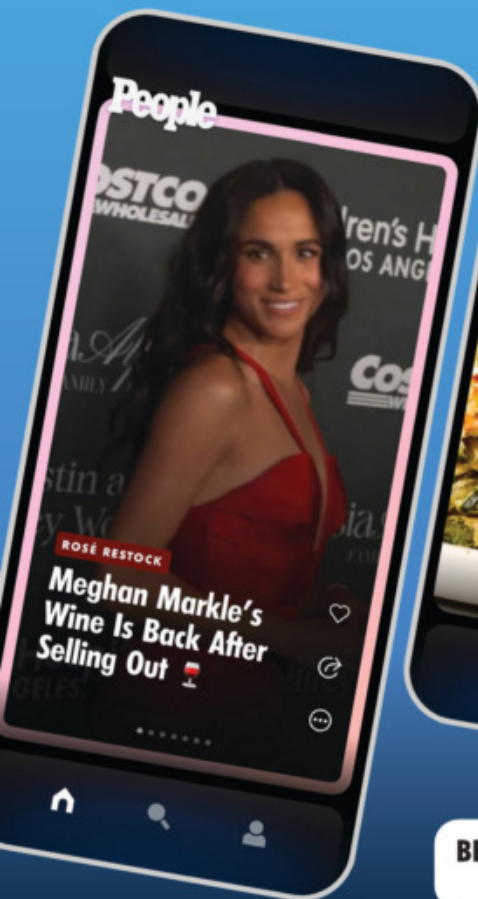
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The Craft of Real Estate

To stage *or* not to stage?

THAT IS THE QUESTION.



The affiliated agents of Better Homes and Gardens® Real Estate know a thing or two about making homes look their very best when they're ready to go on the market. After all, Better Homes and Gardens® Real Estate is the only real estate brand who offers its agents special home staging courses led by the designers and home professionals who create the very magazine you have in your hands right now.

When selling a house, a few key questions you should ask of a real estate agent are "Is it worth the time and expense to professionally stage my home? Or is it smarter and more cost-effective to simply make minor adjustments?" A full professional staging can include bringing in new furniture throughout the home, freshly painting walls, and updating fixtures. Meanwhile, a small makeover might include simply decluttering the home, adding a few colorful pillows, and placing attractive floral arrangements in key locations.

The level of beautification a home requires can vary depending on a home's condition. And there is both an art and a science to deciding how far you should go in making your home ready for the public. At Better Homes and Gardens® Real Estate, our agents consider many factors before providing advice on each home's particular needs. Those factors include everything from determining an expected return on a staging investment...to an assessment of similar homes in your area...to knowing key features buyers are desiring. Their keen ability to assess, stage, and market clients' homes is why our agents have an astounding customer satisfaction rating of 98%.¹

So, while "to stage or not to stage?" is a critical question every home seller should ask—there is no question that our agents are the best choice in helping you find the right answer.



To get our complete staging guide or find an agent, visit BHGRE.com or scan this code.





How much can a makeover make you?

Staged homes typically sell for more money than homes that aren't staged. In fact, a recent study found that staged homes can return up to five and a half times the cost of a staging investment.² At Better Homes and Gardens® Real Estate, our agents can give you sage advice on the type of staging required to sell your home for the best price—whether it's a full staging like you see here or a simple spruce up.



¹Based on BHGRE customer survey results from 01/01/24 – 12/31/24. ²Source: Home Staging Institute, "Home Staging Statistics – 2025 Update." <https://homestaginginstitute.com/home-staging-statistics/> | ©2025 Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate LLC. All rights reserved. Better Homes and Gardens®, BHGRE®, the Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate Logo and Expect Better® are registered service marks owned by Meredith Operations Corporation and licensed to Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate LLC. Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate LLC fully supports the principles of the Fair Housing Act and the Equal Opportunity Act. Each franchise is independently owned and operated. Any services or products provided by independently owned and operated franchisees are not provided by Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate LLC. If your property is listed with a real estate broker, please disregard. It is not our intention to solicit the offerings of other real estate brokers.

Budget The Magic Number

It's not sexy, but it is true: Affordability is the most important quality when house-hunting. These steps help you figure out how much you can spend.

Step #1

Determine your debt-to-income (DTI) ratio

Lenders use this formula to decide if and how much they will loan to you, and on what terms.

● **Add up** all your monthly debts, including loans, credit card payments, car payments, and alimony or child support. (Don't add in items like groceries and utilities.)

● **Divide** your debts by your gross (aka pretax) monthly income.

● **Multiply** that by 100. This is your DTI ratio.

Mortgage lenders typically want to see a DTI of 36% or lower; however, you may qualify if yours inches

into the 40s. The lower the percentage, the better rate you'll get.

Step #2

Determine your max mortgage payment

The rule of thumb is that this payment, including loan principal, interest, taxes, and homeowner's insurance, should be no greater than 28% of your gross monthly income.

● **Multiply** your gross monthly income by 0.28. This is only a guideline.

You'll want it lower if you need to build up savings, prefer plenty of disposable income, or plan on making lots of renovations, for example.

Step #3

Factor in additional funds

Mainly, this means down payment money, which can net you a lower interest rate and drive down your monthly mortgage payment, but there are other costs you may incur. These include earnest money (to show a seller you're serious),

closing costs (typically between 2% and 6% of your loan amount), home renovations, and move-in essentials, for instance.

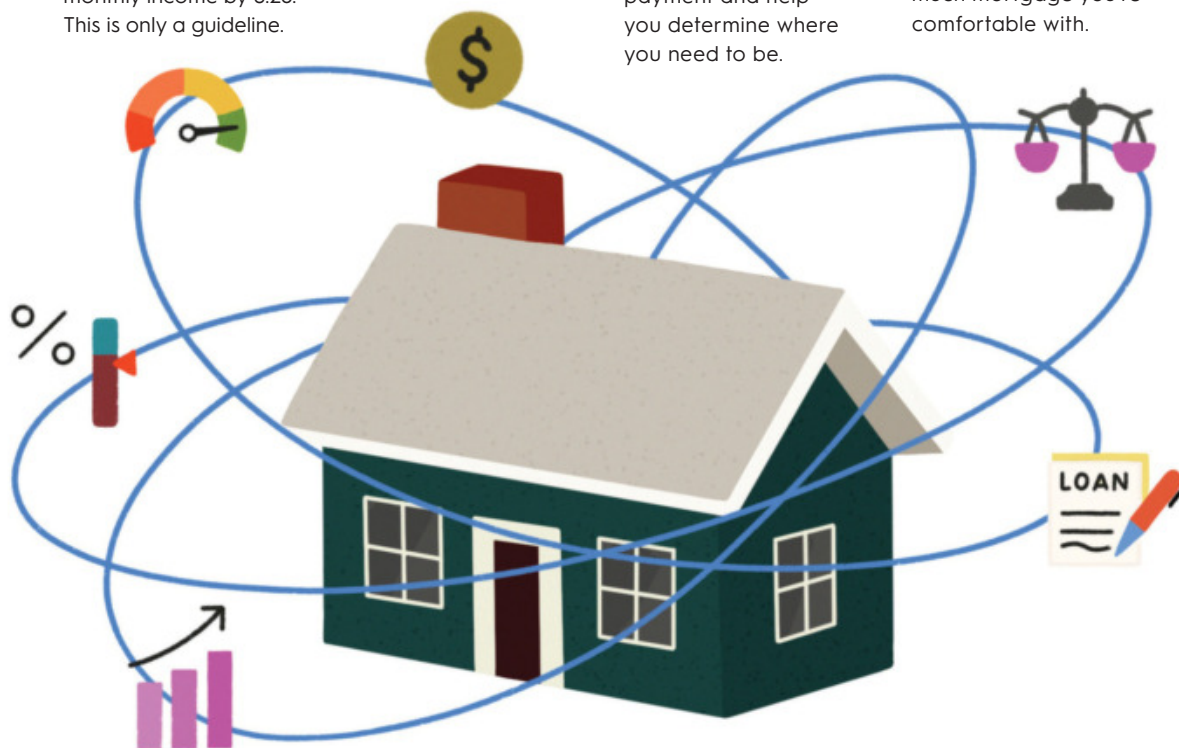
Step #4

Play with an online mortgage calculator

Google "mortgage calculator" (we like the Investopedia one). Plug in different home prices, loan terms, and other factors to get an estimated monthly payment and help you determine where you need to be.

Step #5 Find a first-rate lender

Shop around. Interview different brokers and check with your bank and local credit unions too. Whoever you ultimately choose will dial in the numbers and can also get you a preapproval letter that shows sellers you're serious. And remember: Just because you're approved for a certain amount doesn't mean you have to spend it all. In the end, only you can decide how much mortgage you're comfortable with.



Smooth Moves

Lay the groundwork for an easier transition.

● PARE DOWN AS YOU PACK

Allow only things that you need, love, and use into your new home. "We frequently unpack and organize for clients who skip this step, and the overwhelm they feel can be crushing," says

Lisa Smith, founder of North Carolina-based organizing company Simplify Studio.

● DESIGNATE "UNPACK FIRST" BOXES

Do this for the kitchen, bathroom, and bedrooms, Smith says. Include any items needed during the first day or two in your new

home—bedding, towels, dish soap, coffee-making supplies—to prevent frantic searches.

● MATCH BOXES TO ROOMS

When packing, label each box with contents and room. On moving day, make room signs to coincide with the labels.

● THINK THROUGH ZONES

Pause to decide how you want spaces to function. In the kitchen, use sticky notes to designate zones for food storage, baking, pots and pans, and lunch-packing. A little planning now creates crucial flow.

Let's Unpack This

Pro tips to keep the mood high and the grind steady as you set up your new home.

1

Create an Unpacking HQ

Prep it with cleaning supplies, a step stool, box cutters, and basic tools for projects like picture-hanging and furniture-assembling. Designate more space than you think you'll need for trash and recycling overflow too.



2

Start with Self-Care

Ground yourself by setting up spaces that enable your personal bed- and morning-time routines, Smith says. Things like fresh bedding, chargers, toiletries, a shower curtain, fluffy towels, a change of clothes, and coffee-making supplies.

3

Establish an Unpacking Order

Prioritize the rooms that most significantly ease everyday life, says Breanna Rollings of Moxie Space Professional Organizing. That might be the home office, the kids' rooms, the kitchen, or a cozy hangout.

4

Signal the Vibe

Make a move-in playlist. Stock top-tier snacks and drinks. Plug in lamps or a few strands of twinkle lights. Consider a sage stick, said to cleanse and uplift.

5

Pare Down

If you were too busy to declutter as you packed, cull each box now, Rollings says. Items should be needed or loved to earn a place in your new space.



6

Be Mindful

Imagine how you'll use each cabinet, drawer, and living space, and organize as you go. Give most-used items easy-access real estate, group like with like, and think about how to maximize vertical space.

7

Focus on Good Enough

Avoid perfection paralysis. Don't worry about unpacking and breaking down every last box or finding the perfect place for all your items, Smith says. Add organizers and adjust systems once you've lived in the space awhile.

Dear Home Diary

Keep a journal, digital or physical, about the important goings-on in your new place.

Your future self will be glad to have the record.

DESIGN

Document home projects as you go, including the thought process and inspiration behind them. Record paint colors and purchases for reference.

MAINTENANCE

Keep track of your home repair and upkeep projects, big and small, including dates, costs, warranties, and other key details.

ENTERTAINING

Record the get-togethers that unfold year by year. Include guests, menus, and activities. What went well? What would you do differently?

Photos by Becca Skinner;
Jennifer Hayes

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HOUSE KEYS

Nailed It

Build your DIY kit with these nine reach-for-again-and-again tools.



Cordless Drill and Bit Set

"This was the first power tool I ever owned and it comes in handy constantly," says Lauren Comer, DIYer at Pinch Plate Party.

GREAT FOR: Assembling furniture, hanging curtains, mounting shelves.

16-Foot Tape Measure

You'd be surprised how often you'll need one. In fact, you might as well get two.

GREAT FOR: Making sure furniture fits, sizing window treatments, garden planning.

Multi-Bit Screwdriver

They come with several Phillips and flathead bits, all but guaranteeing you'll have what you need, says Tom Scalisi, a contractor-turned-home improvement writer with over 20 years of

construction experience.

GREAT FOR: Tightening or removing screws on cabinets, outlet plates, furniture, knobs, and pulls.

Hammer Something around 14 to 16 ounces is perfect for light household tasks.

GREAT FOR: Hanging pictures, pulling nails, assembling furniture.

Stud Finder Comer finds the battery-powered version most accurate on a variety of wall types.

GREAT FOR: Locating wall studs for mounting artwork, shelves, and other heavy objects.

Torpedo Level Walls and floors are rarely perfectly level, so this ups your DIY game above just "eyeballing it."

GREAT FOR: Leveling artwork, shelves, furniture.

Drain Snake/Auger

"Plumbing work is expensive and drain snakes aren't," Comer says.

GREAT FOR: A slow sink, shower, or toilet, and tub maintenance and clogs.

Tongue-and-Groove (aka Channellock or Pump) Pliers

They're adjustable so they fit a wide range of pipe sizes or fasteners, and most have serrated jaws that allow them to bite

down on any material. "By far the most useful type of pliers," Scalisi says.

GREAT FOR: Plumbing problems, fixture replacements, tightening a wall-mount handrail.

Flat Pry Bar "A lot of new DIYers jump into superficial projects like trim and moldings, and without a good flat pry bar, they're often doing more damage than they realize," Scalisi says.

GREAT FOR: Removing trim without damaging drywall, door/window installation, carpet removal. ■

COWBOY STEAK AND WHISKEY BUTTER

A blend of chile powders, paprika, and raw sugar helps create the perfect crust when ribeyes hit a hot cast-iron skillet. While the steaks rest, finish each with a few slices of a stir-together compound butter for over-the-top richness.

FLAVOR SWAP

Try a garlicky ranch compound butter in place of the whiskey butter.

Trend Watch COWBOY Skillets

These hearty, rustic recipes pair bold flavors with the heart and soul of the open range. Corral everything in a cast-iron skillet and saddle up for some stick-to-your-ribs eats.



ONLY.
SERIOUS
ABOUT
FLAVOR

Ranch Sheet Pan Chicken

- 1 tbsp Hidden Valley® Original Ranch® Seasoning, Dressing & Dip Mix Shaker
- 5 tbsp olive oil
- 1¼ lbs Brussels sprouts, trimmed & halved
- 1¼ lbs carrots, peeled & cut into 1-inch chunks
- 6-8 bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs
- 2 cloves garlic, finely minced
- Kosher salt & fresh ground pepper, to taste

For safe meat preparation, reference the USDA website.



What's in a Cowboy Recipe?

Maybe it's the wild popularity of shows like *Yellowstone* and *1923*, or country music's recent renaissance, but the internet is currently enamored with just about anything with an air of Western flair. Inspired by home-style, cast-iron-ready meals to sate the most industrious of ranchers, cowboy recipes are best ID'd by their vibe: comforting and substantial, usually with some combo of meat and cheese and smoky barbecue flavors.



RECIPES
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COWBOY CASSEROLE

The classic Midwestern tot-topped hotdish gets a cowboy makeover: Thick-cut bacon, ground sausage, and some veggies bulk up the creamy one-dish wonder.

SKILLET JALAPEÑO- CHEDDAR CORN BREAD

This homemade corn bread layers sweet, spicy, and salty in one skillet. Swipes of Whipped Honey Butter and red pepper jelly balance the heat of pickled chiles and smoked paprika and the saltiness of shredded cheddar.



COWBOY POTATOES

Give home fries some spicy, saucy giddyup with all the makings of a loaded baked potato—bacon, cheddar, and green onions—in one crispy, self-contained skillet.

Drizzle with barbecue sauce and serve alongside any roasted or grilled meat, or top with eggs for a home-style breakfast.





**COWBOY SKILLET
COOKIE**

Hit the trail, s'mores; there's a new campfire dessert in town. All the classic cowboy cookie flavors—oatmeal, chocolate chips, pecans, and coconut—are baked in a skillet to please a crowd. Slice into wedges, or set out a pile of spoons and let everybody dig in. ■

It's not the deli,
it's Deli Fresh



WITH NEW
RESEALABLE
PACKAGING





Sibling Revelry

Big sis Emily Henderson gives a big assist to her brother. The designer collaborates to build his family's Portland, OR, home.

“My brother likes that I’m a designer, but he wanted to make sure everything was family friendly,” Emily Henderson says.

She fulfilled that brief in this room with mismatched, oversize pieces—comfy for watching TV—from her new furniture line.

by JODY GARLOCK photos KAITLIN GREEN



Growing up in the country outside of Coos Bay, OR, Emily Henderson and her brother Ken Starke tended to do their own things. Emily enjoyed hunting for cast-off furniture to refurbish. Ken, five years her junior, preferred tossing footballs around. (Fittingly, Emily is now a designer and social media influencer. Ken spent 12 years as a high school football coach until recently becoming a general contractor.) Despite their different childhood interests, the middle siblings in a family of six kids developed some shared traits. “Our parents raised us to be extremely resourceful and to work hard,” Emily says. “There’s a level of industriousness we both share.”

Their industrious spirit was put to the test when Emily collaborated with Ken and his wife, Katie, on a four-year design project as the couple built and furnished their Portland-area house; architect Anne Usher and Portland interior designer Max Humphrey were also part of the team during the initial phases. Although Emily knew that working with family can be tricky, she was confident they would succeed. “We promised to always be up-front with each other and give each other the freedom to

Curains frame the river view and visually warm the open living room. “It needed coziness,” Emily says.

The built-in bench, like others in the house, is 30 inches deep to allow lounging. The multicolor cushion fabric “pulls everything together,” Emily says.

A tight color palette, mainly greens and blues, ensures the open spaces feel cohesive. Sunny yellow in the artwork and pillows on the built-in bench dapples the dining area, right.

In an open layout, a statement pendant or chandelier helps to delineate spaces.







●
A wall of textural white tiles casts pretty reflections across the kitchen and contrasts the smooth white oak cabinetry. Upper cabinets with glass doors—a compromise to the couple not wanting open shelves—are backless “to show off the whole impact of the tiled wall,” Emily says.

do our roles,” she says. “We have really good chemistry and we like to have fun.”

With the property set along the Willamette River, nature plays prominently in the architecture and interior design. The house—a spin on a Pacific Northwest contemporary cabin with a minimalist Scandinavian feel—incorporates expansive windows, abundant white oak, and touches of green. The open-concept layout keeps the family, which includes kids Kennedy and Frank, connected. “It’s a pretty streamlined house so it’s easy to maintain,” Emily says. “When you have small kids and big jobs, life already feels chaotic. They wanted something simple but warm.”

Surfaces and materials, such as the kitchen’s classic oak cabinetry and white tile wall, all were part of the ground rules: “We agreed that we wouldn’t take a lot of huge design swings that we would regret in 10 years,” Emily says.

One of the big debates was with the living room fireplace, which Usher designed to be the focal point of the open layout. Black tiles and black grout won out as a way to downplay the TV while still being neutral.

Splashes of color and pattern tend to appear in less permanent ways, such as the cushion fabric



The couple nixed a formal office for a multitasking game room, library, and piano room—with seating options for working on laptops. A built-in cabinet segues into shelves, *right*, to create a statement wall visible upon entering the house. Emily had been hoarding the quirky drawings above the piano, *left*, waiting for a good place for them. Glass pocket doors close off the room.

The Starke family—Ken, Katie, and kids Kennedy and Frank, *below*—enjoy game time. The slim-profile digital piano blends into the walls, which are clad in oak planks that are a slightly different color than the floor.

on built-in benches and the navy and green sofas that are part of Emily's new furniture collection.

Still, a designer has to design. Sensing the kitchen could use some impact, Emily knew exactly how to sway the couple to choose dark green countertops. “I did this whole song and dance: Green is Oregon and the river and...Go Ducks!” she says, referencing one of the University of Oregon's colors and its mascot. (She, Ken, and Katie are all alums.) “I begged them to trust me on this one so they didn't end up with a boring space.”

During the project, Emily and her family relocated from California to Portland, where she began renovating an 1800s farmhouse she and her husband purchased. The family joke became who would move into their home first—Team River or Team Farm? Emily's family ultimately won. But every time Emily visits Ken and Katie's sleek new house—the first new build she has been involved in—she admits to feeling a tinge of envy, in a happy way. “There are times we imagine flopping houses, or at least swapping for a weekend,” Emily says. “I have a lot of ownership and pride in that house.”





White oak flooring installed on the ceiling accentuates the primary bedroom's architecture. The headboard anchors the room in nature-inspired color, while the painting by Portland artist Charlie Salas-Humara "makes the room sing colorwise," Emily says.



● In the primary bath, a trendy tub/shower wet room stylishly contains splashes and is equipped with brass controls that allow the water temperature to be preset. "It's extremely dreamy to be in there," Emily says. "The tile is gorgeous. It adds so much texture and makes the space feel so big."



"WE DIDN'T WANT TO TAKE A LOT OF RISKS IN THE FLOORING AND TILE—THE THINGS YOU DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO DEMO OUT."

—EMILY HENDERSON, *designer*



● Kennedy's bedroom, above, is a pretween dream—cool now, but with a neutral foundation and timeless white oak furniture that will allow for easy cosmetic changes in the future. "It's streamlined and organic like the rest of the house but has enough color to make it feel youthful and fun," Emily says. The bed and bedding tie in the green and shades of purple on Kennedy's wish list.

● Architect Anne Usher prefers windows above vanities when possible to capture natural light and views. Emily had mirrors welded to black metal and attached to window frames; sconces were hung on the slanted ceiling. The flooring is the same marble used for the wet room floor, but in large squares rather than herringbone.



Shop the House

Here are some of Emily's go-to sources to bring a warm, modern aesthetic to her brother's home:

WHITE OAK FLOORING (also used on some walls and ceilings): Stuga; stugastudio.com.

TILE Ann Sacks; annsacks.kohler.com.

FAUCETS/FIXTURES Kitchen faucet, primary bathroom fixtures, mirrors, lighting: Kohler; kohler.com. Kitchen hardware: Rejuvenation; rejuvenation.com.

FURNITURE Living room sofas/chair, game room sofa: Room Service by Emily Henderson; wayfair.com. Dining chairs, game room table, beds, patio furniture: AllModern; allmodern.com. **LIGHTING** Living room sconces, kitchen pendants, game room chandelier: Blueprint Lighting; blueprintlighting.com. Living room pendants: Rejuvenation; rejuvenation.com. Living room floor lamp: AllModern; allmodern.com.

One end of the covered patio is a cozy outdoor living room, above, perfect for endless sports watching on the TV. "Our big Starke family barbecues are going to be better because of it," Emily says of the home's inviting outdoor spaces.

Swinging chairs are favorites for the kids to sit and twirl.

An accordion window opens the outdoor dining area, right, to the kitchen, making it easy to shuttle food and drinks to the teak dining table. Emily carried the green kitchen countertops to the bar but otherwise kept a tight, neutral palette—with all furnishings ultramodern and sculptural. ■

"I REALLY CARED ABOUT
THE HOUSE WORKING WELL FOR
THEIR FAMILY. I THINK IT GAVE
KEN CONFIDENCE TO HAVE
SOMEONE WHO KNOWS HIM WELL
BE PART OF THE PROJECT."

—EMILY HENDERSON



It Takes Two

Swirled, layered, and marbled, fall flavors show up in pairs in these sweet recipes to help kick off baking season.



Apricot-Halvah MORNING BUNS

Start with a tube of crescent roll dough to make these three-bite pastries that land somewhere between a cinnamon roll and a croissant. Dried apricots add fruity pops that cut the sweetness of crumbly halvah, the Middle Eastern fudgelike tahini confection.

Cardamom- Brown Butter *BLONDIES*

A decadent amount of brown butter (and a bit of molasses) gives these cookie bars a chewy texture and a deep caramel flavor. Warming, slightly citrusy cardamom and a finishing drizzle of spiced caramel amplify those same toasty, toffee-like flavor notes.





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Chocolate-Ginger

MARBLE COOKIES

Ginger and chocolate may not seem an obvious pair, but ground *and* candied ginger add pep to cocoa's earthy, almost bitter notes. Smoosh and marble hunks of drop-cookie doughs: one a spicy ginger, the other chocolate studded with bittersweet chunks.

Lemon-Matcha

MARBLE CAKE

Green tea powder lends subtle flavor and a decidedly unsubtle tint to this swirly citrus-brightened cake. Alternately spoon the two-tone batter into a fluted tube pan for a marbled treat fit for brunch, fall entertaining, or breakfast tomorrow morning.





Pistachio- Cranberry *PINWHEELS*

These slice-and-bake whirls are a modern take on nostalgic date swirl cookies.

A sharp, orange-spiked cranberry filling contrasts the sweetness of a food processor dough made from roasted pistachios and the usual sugar-cookie suspects.



Nutella- Pumpkin Spice BARS

Take pumpkin bars in a new (chocolaty, hazelnutty) direction:

These tender quick-bread bites are shot through with a swirl of rich Nutella.

For a variation on the theme, skip the chocolate-hazelnut spread and drizzle with peanut butter instead. ■

SOFT AS A BREEZE

Inspired by the Cape Cod surroundings,
a landscape designer creates a serene
garden reminiscent of the dunes.



The front yard of this home in Provincetown, MA, features a wooden path to the front door that almost appears to float. "It's a reference to the dunes of Cape Cod, where you have a lot of boardwalks that keep people from trampling on native vegetation," landscape designer Marissa Angell says. "At the same time, it brings you a little bit closer to the plants that surround you."



From the street, a low fence with roses pushing their way through the slats, above, is an invitation for passersby to take a look at the garden. The 'New Dawn' climbing roses thrive in the coastal climate. Angell, right, used locally sourced gravel on top of wood mulch to suppress weeds and prevent evaporation for a natural and modern look.



he first time landscape designer Marissa Angell consulted with homeowners Scott Sanders and Brad Lamm on their Cape Cod garden, she suggested a field trip. “Scott and Brad like a lot of softer colors and gentle plants that are reminiscent of the coast,” Angell says. So they headed to the nearby dunes for inspiration, where a vision quickly took root.

At the time, the ½-acre yard was a loud mishmash of perennials, many of which were unhappy in the harsh coastal environs. In their place, Angell proposed a seashore-inspired, drought-tolerant garden for the full-sun front yard. She conserved most of the trees, including the windswept pines, as structural plantings. Then she layered in pale, mounding grasses and perennials punctuated by a few tall flowering plants for added interest. It’s a landscape that sings nearly

year-round—with tulips, yarrow, and climbing roses blooming in the warmer months, and golden grasses and allium seed heads carrying the scene in fall.

The designer says the garden’s success all boils down to the right plants for the right place. But anyone can re-create the look with plants suited to their climate. “Use a grass species that you find really beautiful,” she suggests, “and then build up a palette against that.” And if you need inspiration, a field trip to the nearest beach or wild, open space may be in order.

how to Play It Loose

The designer’s tips for planting in a layered, coastal-inspired style

START WITH DRIFTS

Drifts of grasses, especially Mexican feather grass, form the backbone of this garden. Angell also planted midheight perennials like blue star in larger swaths.

USE ODD NUMBERS

Angell likes to cluster accent plants in groups of three or five, which looks more casual than an even-numbered grouping.

DESIGNATE BUDDIES

When deciding what to place where, think about how plants contrast with one another.

ADD SELF-SEEDERS

Weave in some good self-seeders like yarrow to ensure replenishment of the seed bank and suppress undesirable species.

SURPRISE THE EYE

Include a few plants that depart from your palette for extra interest. In this mostly pale garden, red hot poker and fall-blooming ‘Verrone’s Obsidian’ dahlia with its near-black petals break the mold.

Underneath the downy serviceberry, which offers four-season interest, the beds closest to the house function as a cut-flower garden. "To integrate the cut flowers into the more naturalistic planting, the beds feature the same colors and some of the same plants that occur along the boardwalk," Angell says. Interspersed among the grasses and perennials are peonies, 'New Dawn' roses, and dahlias.



"THE BEACH
GRASSES DANCE AND
SHIMMER—THEY
ARE SO RESPONSIVE
TO THE LIGHT AND
THE WIND."

—BRAD LAMM, *homeowner*

In the small
backyard, Angell had a
large deck removed
and a gravel patio
installed in its place.

Three native gray
birches at the corners
lend scale and softness
without blocking
much sunlight. Fast-
growing Virginia
creeper, which has
great autumn color,
makes the landscape
feel more established
than it really is.



The red-tinged patina
of a Corten steel bench
the couple already
owned, *above left*,
prompted Angell to
plant complementary
green grasses and
'Biokovo' geranium,
whose leaves develop
a rusty hue in fall,
nearby.

Built-in raised planters,
left, soften the
demarcation between
architecture and
garden and highlight
the plants. "You're
confronted with plants
in a way that you aren't
normally," she says. For
example, low-growing
ferns are elevated to
nearly eye level.



The designer mixed native and nonnative plants that thrive in the Cape's sandy, well-draining soils and sea salt breezes. Grasses and low-growing perennials are punctuated with tall, dramatic blooms, including the 'Hot and Cold' red hot poker and sea holly in the foreground and threadleaf blue star, yarrow, and 'Mount Everest' allium in the background. ■

• IT TAKES TWO
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Apricot-Halvah Morning Buns

START TO FINISH 35 min.

- ¼ cup apricot preserves
- ¼ cup finely chopped dried apricots
- 3 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 tsp. lemon zest
- 1½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- 2 pinches ground cardamom
- 2 Tbsp. sugar
- 1 8-oz. tube refrigerated crescent roll dough
- ⅓ cup crumbled nut or vanilla halvah

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. In a small microwave-safe bowl stir together preserves, dried apricots, 1 Tbsp. of the butter, the lemon zest, ¾ tsp. of the cinnamon, and a pinch of the cardamom. Microwave on 50% power 2 minutes, stirring every 30 seconds, until dried

apricots are soft. Using a fork, smash fruit; let cool 20 to 30 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, in a small bowl stir together sugar and the remaining ¾ tsp. cinnamon and pinch cardamom. Place the remaining 2 Tbsp. butter in another small microwave-safe bowl; microwave on high until melted, 30 seconds.

3. Generously brush six 2½-inch muffin cups with melted butter. Sprinkle sides and bottom of each cup with about ½ tsp. of the sugar mixture. (You will not use all of the butter and sugar mixture.)

4. On a lightly floured surface lay out crescent roll dough, pinching seams together. Gently shape into a 12x8-inch rectangle; don't stretch dough. Spread cooled apricot mixture evenly over dough all the way to the edges. Sprinkle evenly with halvah. Starting at a long edge, roll dough into a tight log. Using a serrated knife, cut roll into six 2-inch slices. Place slices, cut sides up, in prepared muffin cups. Brush tops lightly with some remaining melted butter.

5. Bake until tops are golden brown, 15 to 18 minutes. Brush buns with the remaining melted butter and sprinkle with the remaining sugar mixture. Let cool in muffin cups 5 minutes. Remove buns from cups and serve warm. Do not cool

completely in cups; they may stick. (Store in an airtight container



The Scoop Halvah

The nutty, sesame-based candy made from tahini and sugar (at its most basic) has a dense, slightly crumbly, fudgelike consistency. Halvah varies by country and region: Common inclusions are chocolate, dried fruit, nuts, and flavorings like cardamom and rose water.

at room temperature up to 2 days.) Makes 6 buns.

PER BUN 297 cal, 16 g fat (7 g sat fat), 15 mg chol, 299 mg sodium, 36 g carb, 1 g fiber, 19 g sugars, 4 g pro

Cardamom-Brown Butter Blondies

Semisweet chocolate contrasts the sweetness of a homemade cardamom-spiced caramel.

HANDS ON 20 min.

TOTAL TIME 2 hr. 25 min.

- 1¼ cups unsalted butter
- 1 cup packed dark brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 Tbsp. molasses
- 1 Tbsp. plus 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. ground cardamom
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- ¼ tsp. baking soda
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 Tbsp. light-color corn syrup
- ½ cup plus 1 Tbsp. heavy cream, plus more as needed
- 3 Tbsp. unsalted butter, cut up
- 1 cup powdered sugar, sifted

1. For brown butter, in a medium skillet heat the 1¼ cups butter over medium-low until melted. Simmer, stirring or swirling the skillet occasionally, until butter turns golden brown and smells nutty, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat; cool 10 minutes.

2. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a 9-inch square baking pan with parchment paper, extending parchment over edges of pan.



3. Pour 1 cup of the brown butter into a large bowl, spooning about two-thirds of the browned bits in bottom of skillet into the bowl. Whisk in brown sugar, eggs, molasses, 1 Tbsp. vanilla, and 1 tsp. *kosher salt*.

4. In a medium bowl whisk together flour, ½ tsp. of the cardamom, the baking powder, and baking soda. Add chocolate chips; toss until coated. Stir flour mixture into brown sugar mixture. Spread batter in prepared pan.

5. Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 25 minutes. Cool on a wire rack 15 minutes.

6. Meanwhile, for caramel, in a deep, heavy saucepan combine granulated sugar, corn syrup, and ¼ cup *water*. Cook, stirring, over medium-high until sugar dissolves and comes to boiling, 5 minutes. Continue boiling, swirling pan to promote even browning without stirring, until mixture is pecan brown, 13 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in ½ cup cream, the cut-up butter, ½ tsp. of the vanilla, ½ tsp. *kosher salt*, and ¼ tsp. of the cardamom until butter melts. (You'll have about 1¼ cups caramel. Refrigerate extra in an airtight container up to 3 weeks. To warm, microwave on 50% power 45 seconds.)

7. For icing, rewarm remaining brown butter (about 2 Tbsp.) in the skillet just until melted. Whisk in powdered sugar, a pinch *kosher salt*, and the remaining 1 Tbsp. cream, ½ tsp. vanilla, and ¼ tsp.

cardamom until smooth. If necessary, add more cream, 1 tsp. at a time, to reach a spreadable consistency.

8. Spread warm blondies with icing and about ¼ cup of the caramel. Cool completely. Use parchment to lift uncut bars out of pan; cut into bars. Makes 16 bars.

PER BAR 333 cal, 20 g fat (12 g sat fat), 65 mg chol, 131 mg sodium, 39 g carb, 1 g fiber, 30 g sugars, 2 g pro

Chocolate-Ginger Marble Cookies

HANDS ON 30 min.
TOTAL TIME 50 min.

- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- ½ tsp. baking powder**
- ¼ to ½ cup finely chopped candied ginger**
- 2 tsp. ground ginger**
- ¼ tsp. ground cinnamon**
- ⅛ tsp. ground cloves**
- 1 cup butter, softened**
- 1 cup packed brown sugar**
- 1 egg**
- 1 tsp. vanilla**
- 2 Tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder**
- 2 oz. bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped (½ cup)**
- Granulated sugar**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a medium bowl stir together flour, baking powder, and ½ tsp. *kosher salt*. Stir in candied ginger. In a small bowl stir together ground ginger, cinnamon, and cloves.

2. In a large bowl beat butter and brown sugar with a mixer on medium to high until light and fluffy, 2 minutes. Add egg and

vanilla; beat until fully combined. Add flour mixture; beat on low until combined.

3. Divide dough in half; place in separate medium bowls. Mix spice mixture into one dough portion. Mix cocoa powder and chopped chocolate into the other dough portion.

4. On a lightly floured surface pat each dough portion into a 6x5-inch rectangle. Cut each into thirty 1-inch pieces.

5. Press one piece of ginger dough and one piece of chocolate dough together. Pinch and divide pressed pieces to alternate colors; roll into a ball to create a marble effect. Roll ball in granulated sugar. Repeat to make 30 balls.

6. Place balls 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Using a glass dipped in granulated sugar, gently flatten balls into 1¾-inch rounds. Bake until lightly browned on bottoms, 10 to 13 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 1 minute. Remove; cool on wire racks. (Store cookies between sheets of waxed paper or parchment paper in an airtight container at room temperature up to 3 days; freeze up to 3 months.) Makes 30 cookies.

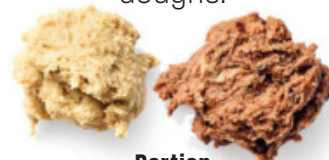
PER COOKIE 131 cal, 7 g fat (4 g sat fat), 22 mg chol, 81 mg sodium, 16 g carb, 1 g fiber, 8 g sugars, 1 g pro



CHOCOLATE-
GINGER
MARBLE
COOKIES

How-To Marble & Swirl

For graphic marbling, split, stack, and roll the two doughs.



Portion

Cut both dough portions into bite-size pieces.



Smoosh

Working with one hunk of each flavor, press the duo together side by side.



Pinch

Split the dough hunk in half so you have two two-tone portions.



Roll

Combine the pieces back into one ball and roll to marble.



Lemon-Matcha Marble Cake

HANDS ON 30 min.
TOTAL TIME 2 hr. 30 min.

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- 1 cup sour cream
- 2 medium lemons, zested and juiced (1 Tbsp. zest, 6 Tbsp. juice)
- ½ tsp. vanilla
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 3 eggs
- 1½ Tbsp. matcha (green tea powder), sifted, plus more for garnish
- 1 cup powdered sugar, sifted

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour a 10-inch fluted tube pan. In a medium bowl stir together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and 1 tsp. *kosher salt*. In a small bowl stir together sour cream, 4 Tbsp. of the lemon juice, and the vanilla.

2. In a large bowl combine lemon zest and granulated sugar. Beat with a mixer on low until mixture is sandy and lemon zest has released its oils, 5 minutes. Add butter. Beat on medium-high until very light and fluffy, scraping sides of bowl as needed, 8 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time, beating on



Matcha GRADIENT

Matcha powder is categorized into three grades: ceremonial, premium or daily, and culinary. Ceremonial will yield the most vibrant color and a strong tea flavor to the cake, but any grade will work.

medium until incorporated after each addition. Alternately add flour mixture and sour cream mixture to the batter, beating just until combined.

3. Spoon about 2 heaping cups batter into a medium bowl; fold in matcha. Spoon the two batters into prepared pan, alternating colors. Using a knife, gently swirl batters together; smooth top.

4. Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 40 to 45 minutes. Cool in pan on a wire rack 10 minutes. Remove cake from pan; cool completely on wire rack.

5. For glaze, in a small bowl whisk together powdered sugar and 1 Tbsp. of the lemon juice. If necessary, add more lemon juice, 1 tsp. at a time, to reach drizzling consistency.

6. Transfer cake to a serving plate or place a sheet of parchment paper under the wire rack with cake. Spoon glaze over cake; let dry 10 minutes. Dust with additional matcha powder. Serves 12.



LEMON-MATCHA MARBLE CAKE

PER SERVING 440 cal, 20 g fat (12 g sat fat), 99 mg chol, 312 mg sodium, 61 g carb, 1 g fiber, 44 g sugars, 4 g pro

Pistachio-Cranberry Pinwheels

HANDS ON 30 min.
TOTAL TIME 3 hr. 10 min.

- 1 small orange, zested and juiced (1 tsp. zest, 2 tsp. juice)
- 1½ cups fresh or frozen cranberries
- ¼ cup dried cranberries
- ⅓ cup granulated sugar
- ¾ tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1¼ tsp. vanilla
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- ⅔ cup toasted pistachios, skins rubbed off if necessary, finely chopped
- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 10 Tbsp. butter, softened
- 1 egg yolk

1. In a medium saucepan combine orange zest, orange juice, fresh cranberries, dried cranberries, granulated sugar, cinnamon, and ½ tsp. *kosher salt*. Cook, stirring, over medium-high until sugar is dissolved and mixture begins to boil; reduce heat to medium. Cover and simmer, stirring occasionally, until berries are completely softened and mixture forms a thick paste, 10 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in ¼ tsp. of the vanilla. Let cool 15 minutes. Transfer mixture to a food processor. Process until mixture is smooth; transfer to a bowl. Cover and chill filling until completely cool, 30 to 45 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, in a clean food processor bowl combine powdered sugar and pistachios. Cover; pulse until pistachios are finely ground. Add flour, butter, egg yolk, ¼ tsp. *kosher salt*, and the remaining 1 tsp. vanilla. Cover; pulse until dough forms.

3. Roll out dough between two sheets of parchment paper to a 14x10-inch rectangle (about ⅛ inch thick). Remove top sheet

of parchment. Carefully spread cooled cranberry filling evenly over dough.

4. Starting at a long edge, roll dough into a tight log, using parchment to lift dough as you go. Cut log in half; wrap halves in plastic wrap. Chill until firm, at least 2 hours or up to 12 hours.

5. Preheat oven to 325°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. Cut logs into ¼-inch-thick slices. Arrange slices 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets. Bake until edges are set and bottoms are lightly browned, 10 to 12 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 1 minute. Remove; cool on wire racks. (Store cookies between sheets of waxed paper or parchment paper in an airtight container at room temperature up to 3 days; freeze up to 3 months.) Makes 48 cookies.

PER COOKIE 80 cal, 3 g fat (2 g sat fat), 10 mg chol, 44 mg sodium, 12 g carb, 1 g fiber, 8 g sugars, 1 g pro



CIRCLE UP

As your dough roll loses its chill, the slices may be less than perfectly round. Use a cookie cutter to shape them up: Center the cutter over each slice and move in small circles to scoot slices back into rounds before baking.



Nutella-Pumpkin Spice Bars

For a more pronounced pumpkin spice flavor, you can substitute 2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice for the cinnamon, ginger, and nutmeg.

HANDS ON 15 min.

TOTAL TIME 1 hr. 30 min.

- 1 1/3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. ground ginger
- 1/8 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1 cup canned pumpkin
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup packed dark brown sugar
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1/2 cup chocolate-hazelnut spread, such as Nutella

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 13x9-inch baking pan; line with parchment paper, extending parchment over edges of pan.
2. In a large bowl whisk together flour, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda, ginger, nutmeg, and 1 tsp. kosher salt. In a separate large bowl whisk together pumpkin, oil, brown sugar, granulated sugar, eggs, and vanilla until well

combined. Stir flour mixture into pumpkin mixture until no lumps remain. Pour batter into prepared pan; smooth top.

3. In a small microwave-safe bowl warm chocolate-hazelnut spread until thin, 30 seconds. Drizzle spoonfuls over batter; using a knife or skewer, swirl and marble the batter. Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 15 to 20 minutes. Cool completely in pan on a wire rack, 1 hour. Use parchment to lift uncut bars out of pan; cut into bars. (Store between sheets of waxed paper or parchment paper in an airtight container at room temperature up to 5 days.) Makes 16 bars.

PER BAR 213 cal, 10 g fat (4 g sat fat), 23 mg chol, 166 mg sodium, 28 g carb, 1 g fiber, 18 g sugars, 3 g pro



• COWBOY SKILLETS pages 58–62

Cowboy Steak and Whiskey Butter

Change up the finisher flavor profile by swapping the Whiskey Butter for a garlic-ranch version or try our Cowboy Butter (scan code below). Butter (scan code below).

START TO FINISH 35 min.

- 2 1-inch-thick bone-in ribeye steaks (about 1 lb. each)
- 1 Tbsp. New Mexico chile powder or chili powder
- 1 Tbsp. chipotle chile powder
- 1 Tbsp. turbinado (raw) sugar
- 1 1/2 tsp. smoked paprika
- 1 1/2 tsp. ground white pepper
- 2 slices Whiskey Butter or Garlic-Ranch Butter

1. Let steaks come to room temperature, 20 minutes. Meanwhile, for rub, in a small bowl stir together New Mexico chile powder, chipotle chile powder, turbinado sugar, paprika, white pepper, and 1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper. (Store extra rub in an airtight container in a cool place up to 3 months.)
2. Pat steaks with paper towels to remove excess moisture. Brush steaks lightly with vegetable oil. Sprinkle about 1 Tbsp. spice rub and a little kosher salt on steaks; pat in with fingers.
3. Heat a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high until very hot. Add steaks; reduce heat to

medium. Cook 5 minutes. Turn steaks over and cook until desired doneness (145°F for medium rare or 160°F for medium), 5 to 7 minutes. (If meat browns too quickly, reduce heat to medium-low.) Transfer steaks to a cutting board; tent with foil. Let rest 5 minutes.

4. Slice steaks and top with Whiskey Butter. Serves 4.

WHISKEY BUTTER In a medium bowl soak 2 finely chopped shallots in 2 Tbsp. whiskey, such as Jack Daniel's, 5 minutes. Add 1 cup softened unsalted butter, 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley, 2 tsp. additional whiskey, 1/2 tsp. Dijon mustard, 1/2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce, 1/2 tsp. salt, and ground white pepper to taste; mix well. Transfer butter mixture to a sheet of plastic wrap. Use plastic wrap to form butter into a log. Chill until firm, at least 3 hours. (Refrigerate up to 1 week; freeze up to 3 months.) Makes about 1 cup.



COWBOY BUTTER

Double down on down-home flavors: A perennial hit on *BHG.com*, this riff has herbs, lemon, and plenty of cracked black pepper.





**SKILLET
JALAPEÑO-CHEDDAR
CORN BREAD**

PER SERVING 512 cal, 34 g fat (14 g sat fat), 160 mg chol, 190 mg sodium, 5 g carb, 1 g fiber, 3 g sugars, 44 g pro

GARLIC-RANCH BUTTER In a medium bowl combine 1 cup softened unsalted butter with 1 Tbsp. dry ranch dressing mix and 4 garlic cloves, grated; mix well. Follow forming and chilling preparation from Whiskey Butter.

Skillet Jalapeño-Cheddar Corn Bread

START TO FINISH 35 min.

- 1 cup yellow cornmeal
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup sugar
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. smoked paprika
- 1½ cups buttermilk
- 2 eggs
- 8 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese (4 oz.)
- ¼ cup sliced pickled jalapeño peppers, chopped
- Whipped Honey Butter (optional)
- Purchased red pepper jelly (optional)

1. Place a 10-inch cast-iron skillet on center rack in oven. Preheat oven to 400°F.
 2. In a large bowl whisk together cornmeal, flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, smoked paprika, and 1 tsp. salt. In a medium bowl whisk together buttermilk, eggs, and 6 Tbsp. of the melted butter. Add to flour mixture; stir in cheddar cheese and pickled jalapeños until just combined.
 3. Carefully remove skillet from oven and add 1 Tbsp. of the melted butter, tilting skillet to coat bottom and sides (butter will pop). Add batter to skillet.
 4. Bake until golden brown and a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 22 to 26 minutes. Brush with remaining 1 Tbsp. melted butter. If you like, serve with Whipped Honey Butter and/or red pepper jelly. (Refrigerate corn bread in an airtight container up to 3 days.) Serves 10.
- WHIPPED HONEY BUTTER**
In a small bowl combine ½ cup softened butter, ¼ cup honey, and a pinch salt. Beat with a mixer on high until light and fluffy, 2 minutes. (Cover and

refrigerate up to 1 week.) Makes about ½ cup.
PER SERVING 265 cal, 15 g fat (9 g sat fat), 73 mg chol, 633 mg sodium, 26 g carb, 2 g fiber, 7 g sugars, 7 g pro

Cowboy Casserole

HANDS ON 30 min.
TOTAL TIME 1 hr. 10 min.

- 2 slices thick-cut bacon, chopped
- 1 cup chopped yellow onion
- 1 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- 8 oz. ground pork sausage
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1½ cups frozen whole kernel corn
- 1½ cups shredded cheddar cheese (6 oz.)
- 1 10.5-oz. can condensed cream of mushroom soup
- ½ cup milk
- ¼ cup sour cream
- 1 28- to 32-oz. pkg. frozen fried potato nuggets, such as Tater Tots
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet cook bacon over medium until crisp, 8 minutes. Transfer bacon to a paper towel-lined plate, reserving 1 Tbsp. drippings in skillet.
2. Add onion and bell pepper to drippings in skillet; cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, 4 minutes. Increase heat to medium-high. Add ground beef and sausage; cook, breaking up meat, until browned, 6 to 8 minutes. Add garlic; cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, 1 minute. Remove from heat; drain fat.
3. Stir in corn, ½ cup of the cheese, the soup, milk, sour cream, and ½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper. Sprinkle with remaining 1 cup cheese. Arrange potato nuggets over cheese layer; top with reserved bacon and, if you like, additional cheese.

4. Bake until golden brown and beef mixture is bubbly, 35 to 40 minutes. Let sit 5 minutes before serving. Garnish with parsley. Serves 8.

PER SERVING 662 cal, 38 g fat (13 g sat fat), 107 mg chol, 1,288 mg sodium, 49 g carb, 4 g fiber, 7 g sugars, 34 g pro

Cowboy Potatoes

HANDS ON 15 min.
TOTAL TIME 1 hr. 5 min.

- 3 slices thick-cut bacon, chopped
- 1½ lb. new potatoes, cut into 1-inch pieces
- ½ cup coarsely chopped red onion
- ½ tsp. paprika
- ¼ tsp. garlic powder
- ¾ cup shredded cheddar cheese (3 oz.)
- ⅓ cup barbecue sauce
- 1 medium fresh jalapeño pepper, sliced
- 2 green onions, chopped
- ¼ cup sour cream
- Fresh cilantro (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet cook bacon over medium until crisp, 8 minutes. Transfer bacon to a paper towel-lined plate, reserving 2 Tbsp. drippings in skillet.
 2. Add potato pieces, chopped red onion, paprika, garlic powder, ½ tsp. salt, and ¼ tsp. freshly ground black pepper to drippings in skillet; stir mixture to combine.
 3. Roast until tender and browned, 45 minutes, stirring after 30 minutes. Sprinkle with cheese and drizzle with barbecue sauce. Roast until cheese melts, 5 minutes more.
 4. Sprinkle with bacon, jalapeño, green onions, and, if you like, additional cheese. Serve with sour cream. If you like, garnish with cilantro. Serves 4.
- PER SERVING** 372 cal, 19 g fat (9 g sat fat), 42 mg chol, 812 mg sodium, 41 g carb, 4 g fiber, 12 g sugars, 11 g pro

Cowboy Skillet Cookie

The cookie dough will be stiff and slightly crumbly thanks to all of the mix-ins.

HANDS ON 20 min.

TOTAL TIME 55 min.

- 1 cup unsalted butter, cut up
- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1½ cups packed brown sugar
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 Tbsp. vanilla
- 1 12-oz. pkg. bittersweet chocolate chips (2 cups)
- 1¾ cups regular rolled oats
- ¾ cup sweetened flaked coconut
- ½ cup coarsely chopped pecans
- Sea salt flakes
- Vanilla ice cream (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. For brown butter, in a medium skillet heat butter over medium-low until melted. Simmer, stirring or swirling the skillet occasionally, until butter turns golden brown and smells nutty, about 5 minutes. Transfer butter to a large bowl; cool slightly.
2. In a medium bowl whisk together flour, baking soda,

cinnamon, and ¾ tsp. salt.

3. Whisk brown sugar, granulated sugar, eggs, and vanilla into brown butter. Stir in flour mixture. Stir in chocolate chips, oats, coconut, and pecans until combined. Press dough evenly into a 12-inch cast-iron skillet. Sprinkle top with sea salt flakes.

4. Bake until cookie is firm to the touch and edges begin to pull away from sides of skillet, 35 to 40 minutes. Run a thin metal spatula around edge of cookie to loosen it. Cut into wedges and serve slightly warm or at room temperature with ice cream and additional coconut flakes, if you like. (Cover cookie and store at room temperature up to 3 days.) Serves 16.

PER SERVING 476 cal, 24 g fat (13 g sat fat), 54 mg chol, 252 mg sodium, 61 g carb, 4 g fiber, 37 g sugars, 6 g pro

THRILLS & CHILLS pages 22–23

Dragon Fruit Punch

START TO FINISH 10 min.

- 1 12-oz. pkg. frozen dragon fruit cubes, such as Sambazon, thawed



DRAGON FRUIT PUNCH



POISON APPLE SOUR

- 1 pint mango sorbet
- 12 oz. lemon-lime soda or Prosecco

Place dragon fruit in a blender; cover and blend until smooth. Spoon about 3 Tbsp. fruit puree into each of six 8-oz. glasses. Top with small scoops of mango sorbet (about ½ cup per glass). Slowly pour 2 oz. (¼ cup) soda or Prosecco into each glass. Makes 6 drinks.

PER DRINK 155 cal, 1 g fat, 14 mg sodium, 38 g carb, 2 g fiber, 31 g sugars, 1 g pro

Poison Apple Sour

START TO FINISH 5 min.

- 1 oz. (2 Tbsp.) vodka
- 1 oz. (2 Tbsp.) sour apple schnapps, such as DeKuyper Pucker
- Ice cubes
- 1½ oz. (3 Tbsp.) hard apple cider, chilled
- 1 tsp. grenadine
- Gummy candy eyeball or apple slice, for garnish (optional)

1. In a mixing glass or cocktail shaker combine vodka and sour apple schnapps. Fill glass or shaker with ice. Stir (or cover and shake) until chilled, 1 minute.

Strain into a coupe glass. Top with hard apple cider.

2. Insert a bar spoon into glass. Slowly pour grenadine down the spoon, allowing it to settle at bottom of glass. (Or slowly pour grenadine down the inside side of glass.) If you like, garnish with a gummy eyeball. Makes 1 drink.

PER DRINK 219 cal, 5 mg sodium, 20 g carb, 18 g sugars

Cranberry Zombie Mocktails

The cranberry syrup may seem thin, but it will thicken as it chills. For a boozy version, add 2 oz. white rum to each serving in Step 3.

HANDS ON 15 min.

TOTAL TIME 45 min.

- 1 cup fresh or frozen cranberries
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 cups crushed ice or 3 cups ice cubes
- 1 cup fresh orange juice
- 1 cup unsweetened pineapple juice
- ¼ cup fresh lime juice (from 2 medium limes)

1. In a small saucepan stir together cranberries, sugar,

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COOKBOOK



CRANBERRY
ZOMBIE
MOCKTAILS



MAGIC
MATCHA
BOBA
LATTES

and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water. Bring to boiling; reduce heat to medium. Simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, 6 minutes. Pour mixture through a fine-mesh sieve, pressing with the back of a spoon. Discard solids. Let cool 5 minutes; cover and chill syrup at least 15 minutes and up to 12 hours.

2. In a blender combine ice, orange juice, pineapple juice, and lime juice. Cover and blend until smooth, adding more ice as needed to reach desired slushy consistency. **3.** Drizzle cranberry syrup around inner edges of four 8- to 10-oz. glasses so it drips down. Pour juice slush into glasses. Makes 4 drinks.

PER DRINK 166 cal, 5 mg sodium, 42 g carb, 40 g sugars, 1 g pro

Magic Matcha Boba Lattes

Look for uncooked boba pearls, or pearled

tapioca, in the tea or beverage aisle of Asian markets and large grocery stores. Prepare according to package directions (or look for precooked boba pearls). **START TO FINISH** 20 min.

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
1 tsp. butterfly pea flower powder
4 tsp. matcha (green tea powder)
1 cup plus 1 Tbsp. hot water
2 cups whole milk
2 tsp. vanilla
Crushed ice
 $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cooked brown sugar or plain boba pearls

1. In a small saucepan whisk together sugar, butterfly pea flower, and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cold water. Cook, stirring, over medium until sugar is dissolved, 1 minute. Remove from heat. Cover; let steep 10 minutes. Pour syrup through a fine-mesh sieve into a small glass measuring cup; let cool.

2. Meanwhile, in a 2-cup glass measuring cup whisk together matcha and the 1 Tbsp. hot water until smooth, 30 seconds. Add remaining 1 cup hot water, whisking constantly until completely combined.

3. In another 2-cup glass measuring cup, stir together milk and vanilla.

4. For each drink, pour 2 Tbsp. pea-flower syrup into a 10- to 12-oz. glass; top with crushed ice. Add 2 to 3 Tbsp. boba pearls to each glass. Slowly pour $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the milk mixture into each glass over the back of a spoon. (Pouring layer ingredients over a spoon helps keep the layers separated in the glass). Slowly pour $\frac{1}{4}$ cup matcha tea over the back of a spoon onto milk layer. Makes 4 drinks.

PER DRINK 212 cal, 4 g fat (2 g sat fat), 12 mg chol, 53 mg sodium, 40 g carb, 32 g sugars, 4 g pro ■



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How to Survive the **DRY** SEASON

Chilly temps and indoor heat bring on dry skin, staticky hair, and chapped lips. Here are the SOS (save our skin—and hair and nails) products you need now.

There's a lot to love about fall and winter—cozy fires, hot cocoa, comfy sweaters. But the combination of low humidity and cold air during these months doesn't do our skin, hair, and nails any favors, stripping them of their built-in moisture. To make matters worse, hot showers are extra drying, and abrasive exfoliants to remove the excess dry skin are too harsh.

There is a better way! Dermatologists Tiffany J. Libby, MD, FAAD, FACMS, director of Mohs micrographic and dermatologic surgery at Brown Dermatology in Rhode Island, and Morayo Adisa, MD, FAAD, medical director of Dermatology Physicians in Chicago, explain what ingredients to look for in products that will help protect, restore, and repair your natural glow and moisture.

PHOTO: TATIANA TIMOFEEVA/STOCKSY UNIT



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STRENGTHEN BRITTLE NAILS AND RAGGED CUTICLES

LOOK FOR:

Petrolatum,
Vitamin E,
Jojoba Oil

The cuticle overlaps the nail plate and serves as a protective seal keeping bacteria and germs out. Applying what's called an occlusive moisturizer (like petrolatum) to your cuticles and nails creates a protective barrier on the skin's surface, which helps keep in moisture. Adisa likes jojoba oil because it's similar in chemical structure to human sebum, making it great for nail and cuticle hydration. Vitamin E is another top ingredient

*
Your skin
can lose as
much as
25 percent
of its natural
moisture
in the winter
months.

that helps replenish moisture, restore elasticity, and reduce brittleness.

TO TRY:

- (1) Bio-Oil Skincare Oil, \$35; ulfa.com
(2) Seaweed Bath Co. Ultra-Hydrating Hand Rescue, \$9; seaweedbathco.com

SOOTHE CRACKED HANDS

LOOK FOR:

Urea,
Ceramides

It's a Catch-22: If you wash your hands frequently to stave off winter germs, they're bound to get very dry. And because your palms lack the glands that produce sebum, the skin doesn't stay moisturized as easily, Libby says.

Urea is a humectant that draws in moisture and gently exfoliates. "It hydrates and softens thickened, cracked skin while helping it better absorb moisture," Adisa says. Meanwhile, ceramides help rebuild the moisture barrier.

TO TRY:

- (3) Eucerin Advanced Repair Hand Cream, \$7; walgreens.com
(4) CeraVe Intensive Moisturizing Lotion for Dry to Very Dry Skin, \$18; target.com



1



2



3



4



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SMOOTH FLAKY FACE PATCHES

LOOK FOR:

Ceramides,
Niacinamide

"Think of your skin cells as the bricks and lipids as the mortar," Libby says.

"When lipids are missing, cracks in the barrier allow water to escape and more irritation to occur."

Dry patches caused by inflammation are a sure sign that your skin barrier is suffering. The key is to replace the lost lipids (aka fats) in your skin and restore the protective barrier.

Ceramides are lipids that can help reduce water loss and improve skin texture. Niacinamide helps increase your skin's ceramide production, reduce inflammation, and even out skin tone.

TO TRY:

- (5) Neutrogena Hydro Boost Water Cream Fragrance-Free Moisturizer, \$20; neutrogena.com
(6) Olay Complete + Rich Moisturizing Cream Sensitive, \$20; olay.com

SOFTEN ROUGH ELBOWS, KNEES, AND HEELS

LOOK FOR:

Shea Butter,
Urea

Skip the harsh physical exfoliants, the derms suggest, and use gentle ingredients like urea to help regulate skin cell turnover. This will prep your skin to absorb moisturizing shea butter and keep skin soft.

TO TRY:

(7) LaRoche-Posay Lipikar Urea 10% Roughness Smoothing Lotion, \$23; laroche-posay.us.com

(8) Prequel Urea Advanced Relief Moisturizing Milk, \$22; prequelskin.com

RELIEVE ITCHY ALLIGATOR LEGS

LOOK FOR:

Jojoba Oil,
Ceramides,
Colloidal
Oatmeal

That persistent itch is your skin barrier crying out for hydration. Colloidal oatmeal gets to work ASAP, helping to soothe the itch, decrease inflammation, and form a protective barrier on the skin's surface.



7



8



9



10



11



12

Meanwhile, ceramides and jojoba oil—which Libby especially likes because it has anti-inflammatory properties that also help with eczema—are playing the long game by rebuilding the natural lipid barrier, locking in hydration, and bringing back that midsummer suppleness.

TO TRY:

(9) Skinfix Lipid-Boost Body Cream, \$48; skinfix.com

(10) Aveeno Daily Moisturizing Lotion, \$10; amazon.com

TAME STATICKY, FRIZZY HAIR

LOOK FOR:

Dimethicone,
Panthenol
(Vitamin B5)

When the outer cuticle of the hair gets damaged from dry air plus chemical and heat styling, you're more likely to find yourself dealing with frizz and static. Hydrating conditioners and leave-in masks that contain humectants like panthenol add and retain moisture to help strengthen the outer layer. For instant smoothing, dimethicone is a silicone that coats your hair, reducing static-causing friction. It also adds shine and helps protect your hair against breakage.

TO TRY:

(11) Dove Intensive Repair Conditioner, \$6; walmart.com

(12) Pantene Pro-V Miracle Rescue Intensive Bond Repair Mask, \$13; target.com

How to Quench Chronic Dryness

Sometimes your skin might be suffering from more than a case of winter dryness.

Can't-miss signs like scaliness, persistent redness/inflammation, and crusting—with no relief from over-the-counter moisturizers—could indicate

a more serious skin condition like eczema or psoriasis, an autoimmune condition.

If you have any of those symptoms and your skin bothers you enough to disrupt your daytime routine or keep you up at night, reach out to your doctor.

Some cases of eczema can be soothed with over-the-counter products specifically formulated for the condition. For more serious eczema or psoriasis, your dermatologist might prescribe topical, oral, or injectable treatments. ■

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So, You've Been Diagnosed with Cancer. Now What?

No two journeys will be the same, but there are certain steps everyone can take to make the path ahead a little clearer. Consider this your road map.

When Lindsay Hawker heard that she had an aggressive form of breast cancer at just 34, she couldn't begin to wrap her head around what she was about to go through. "It felt surreal, like a movie," she remembers. "I never thought I'd hear those words in my lifetime, much less when I had a 4-year-old and 9-month-old baby." But she took things one day at a time and is now celebrating nine years cancer-free. It's nerve-racking and scary to hear that you have cancer; stepping back and mapping out some concrete steps can bring a sense of purpose and focus.



1 Take a breath.

As much as you might want to take action immediately, try your best to hit pause. "While cancer is very serious, rarely is it an emergency," says Arif Kamal, MD, associate professor of medicine at Duke University and chief patient officer for the American Cancer Society. "Patients are often ready to move very fast to alleviate their anxiety, but it's important to get cancer treatment right. I tell patients: 'This cancer probably took years to grow; if we take a few extra weeks to make sure we get it right, we won't lose anything.'" That's exactly what Lindsay did. "One of my doctors said to go home, sleep, gather information, and make decisions from a place of clarity and intuition, not fear," she says.

2 Decide who to tell.

There's no single right way to talk about your diagnosis. "Have a conversation with yourself and your loved ones about

what you feel comfortable sharing," says Fumiko Chino, MD, associate professor in breast radiation oncology at MD Anderson Cancer Center and an American Society of Clinical Oncology expert. "Some people want to announce their diagnosis on social media, others want their family members to spread the word." No matter how public or private you decide to be, identify an inner circle of people you know will show up and support you. "There's a concept called cancer ghosting where your friends assume other friends are checking in and taking care of you, so then nobody does," Kamal says. "I tell people to identify a small group of trusted friends who you can lean on when things get tough and do your best to stay in touch with them." Maybe start a group text so that you can keep them updated, ask if they'll go with you to appointments, or even share a playlist to listen to during treatment or novels to escape into. Think about what type of specific support you'd like in case people don't know what to do, Chino advises.

3 Meet and evaluate your clinical care team.

Decide if your doctors are a good fit. Treating cancer is a marathon, not a sprint; you want people you click with. "Having a good sense of rapport, trust, and connection with your clinical team is really important. You're going to be on a journey with them for months to years," Kamal says. This can mean meeting with them and doing a job interview of sorts. "I was going to need a double mastectomy, which was an eight-hour surgery, so I interviewed surgeons," Lindsay says. "There were some I didn't align with; I felt like they didn't understand my case at all. So I didn't go with them. I knew that if I wasn't my own advocate, nobody else would be."

4 Consider a second (or third) opinion.

If you think you might want a second opinion, you should get one—even if only to gain peace of mind. "If your cancer was caught in an early stage, the initial treatments tend to be quite standardized, so you may not need a second opinion," Chino says. "But having said that, I've had patients who wanted to be absolutely confident in their team and felt it was important to get

*
Even if
you think
your
questions
are silly
or trivial,
ask. Your
doctor
wants you
to! Write
down
all your
worries
and
concerns
before your
visits so
you won't
forget
anything.

one." If you have a rare cancer or it's advanced, you should definitely get more opinions. Ask your current oncologist to recommend someone and share your test results with them. "Really good oncologists are not threatened by you seeking out a second opinion," Kamal says. But note: "Second and third opinions take time, and sometimes (e.g., for advanced cancers) the need to start treatment will take precedence," Chino says. "I usually advise going to an academic cancer center for a second opinion."

5 Find out all the resources available to you.

Your cancer center likely has nutritionists, mental health practitioners, social workers, genetic counselors, and others who can make navigating treatment feel as good as possible. Ask your oncologist about this and mention the aspects that concern you the most. If it's paying for treatment or finding out what your insurance is going to cover, they will be able to point you toward their financial advisor or insurance coordinator. If it's how to tell your kids about your diagnosis, there might be a child life specialist who can help you handle the conversation.

6 Ask all the questions.

Don't be shy or feel like you're a bother: Your oncologist wants you to come to appointments with a list of your questions; that's what they're there for. "Patients worry they come across as high-maintenance, but it's the opposite. I worry when patients don't ask any questions that they're not engaged in the process," Kamal says. "Even if you think your questions are silly or not important, ask." And write everything down ahead of time. "By the time you're in front of a physician, all the questions you thought to ask could be gone from your mind," Chino says.

7 Prioritize self-care.

If there were ever a time to put your health and well-being first, this is it. Chino's recommendations: Eat good, nutritious meals, get enough protein and fluids, and try to do something every day that gets you moving. "Take a walk in your neighborhood or spend some time in nature breathing fresh air," she says. "Go to a space that's wholly different from treating cancer."

"Getting healthy became my number one goal," Lindsay says. "I made exercise and eating as well as I could my priority. When I could only walk to the mailbox because my fatigue was so bad, I did that. Moving was sometimes tough, but it made me feel empowered and alive when I needed it most." ■

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In the Know

News and notes to boost your well-being

Brain teasers (like the Rubik's Cube) may help lower stress in addition to sharpening memory.



41

That's the percent of Americans who don't realize they are paying fees for their 401(k).

Many of those fees occur when you leave a company and don't move your 401(k) funds; some employers charge for record keeping. Call your plan administrator to check if there are fees, then consider rolling over your 401(k) to a retirement plan or an IRA. Whatever you do, don't cash out the money if you're younger than 59½. If you do, you'll pay a hefty fee at tax time.

10/13 IS NATIONAL TRAIN YOUR BRAIN DAY.

Research shows that challenging your brain with games and teasers (think jigsaw and crossword puzzles or Wordle) may help reduce your risk of memory loss and cognitive decline. Give yourself a mental workout with the NYT Games, Lumosity, or Elevate apps. You can also play a game of chess or Sudoku or dig in to a word search.



In a survey of Americans age 18 and older, only 38% had ever discussed finances with an aging parent.

Knowing your parents' plans for retirement and medical care can help things go more smoothly if a parent gets sick. For more ideas on getting the conversation going, check out letsmakeaplan.org.

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH ...CREATINE?

Creatine is used by our muscles for energy, and studies suggest it may give a small boost to memory and brain function in older adults. Your body makes roughly half the creatine it needs on its own; the rest (about 1 to 2 grams daily) you can get in your diet through meat or fish. Experts say it's probably OK for most people to take a supplement, but definitely check with your doctor first for safety and dosage; those with kidney issues may need to skip it.

1 in 5

Americans receive a medical bill that they don't agree with or can't afford to pay.

You're not stuck with it. Try calling the medical office to dispute your bill: Research shows that when people took action, 74 percent who thought there was a mistake got a correction, and 62 percent who tried to negotiate a lower price received one.

3.4 minutes of vigorous physical activity daily slashes the risk of a major cardiovascular event, such as heart attack, by 45 percent in women.

Less than 20 percent of women who are middle-aged or older do exercises regularly (if at all) that get their hearts pumping.



Try a workout that alternates between 30 seconds to 1 minute of intense exercise and 2 to 3 minutes at an easier pace. You can use an app like Interval Timer or Tabata Timer to set intervals.



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Every horizontal surface in your home is an opportunity to tell a little bit of your story.”

—NATE BERKUS



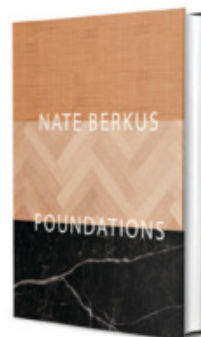
2



3



4



Nate likes extra-large built-ins for living rooms to display family photos and favorite objects.

Nate Berkus

The celebrated interior designer talks about what it takes to create a home that feels deeply personal, even without spending a dime.

Interior designer Nate Berkus' new book, *Foundations* (out November 18), is a compendium of all he's learned over 30 years of decorating, packed with advice for layouts and materials. But it's also full of encouragement for readers to get creative: "The most successful interiors are those that reveal the personalities of the people who live there," he says.

GET INTROSPECTIVE

Along with thinking about the colors and shapes you gravitate to, "dive into your own history when decorating," Nate says.

Think about what places have brought you joy or where your family is from and how to reflect that in your space.

SHOP YOUR HOME

You may already have everything you need to refresh your home's look, he says. "This sounds crazy,

but I love to clear every surface, then start moving objects." Try unconventional combos—like his decision to drape necklaces around an antique bust (2)—for more personality.

GO VINTAGE

For character, you can't beat a great vintage object, says Nate (who curates favorite one-of-a-kind finds [1] for his Chairish shop). He especially likes warming up hardworking rooms like

kitchens (3) with vintage lamps and vessels.

CREATE A CLASSIC FOUNDATION

As much as Nate appreciates a bold, personal decorating statement, he recommends time-proven materials like marble, penny tile, and bronze (4) when renovating, and solids or subtle prints for large upholstered pieces. "If you're making an investment, you want to go for the timeless choice," he says. ■

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